

Prevention Action Change

Building Skills to End Violence

Clara Porter

Portland, ME

March 2, 2025

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee Judiciary,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee.

My name is Clara Porter, I am a longtime resident of Portland and am representing Prevention. Action. Change. in submitting this testimony in support of LD260.

I am the Director of Prevention. Action. Change., an organization dedicated to violence prevention, intervention, response and healing. Our teaching team has traveled to every corner of Maine, helping community organizations, volunteer groups, Wabanaki communities, and businesses become safer and more welcoming for all. What we have learned is that sexual and identity-based harassment are experienced frequently by Mainers based on their gender, gender identity, age, race, religion, national origin and disability. The effects are personal, professional, and economic and leave - this majority of Mainers - feeling like they are not full members of our state.

Passage will give the state of Maine new tools to address discrimination and violations of civil rights that have not yet been, or cannot fully be, addressed by state law.

Let us join the 26 states which have already updated their founding documents by adding positive statements of legal equality for all citizens. Fundamental rights should not be subject to changing political leadership. We must take the steps to be certain that all Mainer citizens are equally protected by the law.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD260.

In Community,

Clara Porter