

March 2, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary:

My name is the Rev. Mark W. Harris. I am a resident of Owls Head, and I am testifying in support of LD537. I submit these remarks as a member of the First Universalist church of Rockland, a Unitarian Universalist congregation, which affirms and promotes justice, equity and compassion in human relations, and the inherent worth and dignity of every person. I support the Maine UU State Advocacy Network (MUUSAN) which links Maine's 26 Unitarian Universalist congregations in working for legislation that embodies those values.

I believe LD 537 should become law because it prohibits doxing, which is harmful to the lives of minors. Doxing allows personal information about minors to become public without that person's consent and may put the minor in harm's way by exposing them to malicious and often false information which might jeopardize their safety. We want all of our children to be safe, and publishing information that may be construed as harmful or hurtful means their safety is threatened, and if allowed, could potentially place any child at risk to the spread of disinformation about those who are labeled "different." Recently this has included a child who is transgender, but it might also mean the labeling of any youth who is labeled "different," such as those with disabilities, those who are immigrants, or those who are persons of color. Please act to keep all of our children free from such harmful spreading of information which often results in spreading fear for their safety. Thank you for listening.

For all these reasons, we need to protect all Maine children and youth. I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 537.

Sincerely,

Rev. Mark W Harris