

Written Testimony in Support of LD260, State of Maine

Christine L. Palmer
Penobscot, Maine
March 3, 2025

Good Morning, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee Judiciary:

It is my pleasure to address you as you consider the merits of LD260, also referred to as Maine's Equal Rights Amendment.

My name is Christine Louise Palmer. I live at 38 Riverside Road in Penobscot, a small town on the Penobscot River. I am a 72-year-old lesbian. My wife and I were married under state and federal law in the year 2004. I have been with my partner for 37 years.

I am writing in support of this legislation based on my personal experience as an "other," in a society that assumes heterosexual orientation unless told otherwise, while also assuming that men are the models for medical testing, tool design, even the positioning of car seat belts!

But who among us is not an "other," in some way? Are you left-handed? Near-sighted? Vegetarian?

This bill would protect **all** of us – whether our "difference" is based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, physical or mental disability, ancestry, or national origin.

Even those who do not think they are an "other" may some day wake up and be told that they are allowed to be discriminated against because they are somehow not exactly what someone in power just does not like, e.g., a Democrat or a Republican! Or a Christian who doesn't go to the "right" church!

This bill **matters** to me. I have lived in other states where I was not protected, in fact where my LGBTQ friends and I were overtly mocked and prohibited from some very basic rights. Please do not let Maine become one of those states.

Thank you for your service to our Democracy and to the rights of Maine citizens. I beg you to take this important opportunity to vote **Ought to Pass LD 260**.