

I am writing to you as a Maine mom of two school-aged kids.

While I think it's a good step that Representative Laurel Libby has been censured, I do not believe it is enough in order to protect our school kids moving forward. As a mom of two kids at Lyman Elementary, and a member of the LGBTQIA+ community, I am nothing but horrified that an adult, and prominent one at that, is allowed to humiliate another person's child online while that child is participating at a school event. This amounts to adults bullying children online. As someone whose career is in IT and protecting PHI, I cannot over stress that the harm this adult has caused to this child for will be for this entire person's life. Nothing on the internet goes away. Ever. Even if she took down the post, there is still a digital footprint that will never go away (let alone all of the shares worldwide at this point).

It is entirely reasonable for school kids and their parents/guardians to expect that at school events, their children would not be subject to online shaming and humiliation by adults. Schools hold students accountable for online bullying of other students. The same expectation should be of adults. The adults are the ones making schools unsafe for kids if this practice is allowed to continue.

I personally think it's weird and gross for so many adults to be obsessed with the reproductive anatomy of other people's children. I also can't stand that some people try to continue to insult this student online by calling them male. Transgender girls are girls, and that's a hill I'm willing to die on. When my wife and I have been discussing this recent event, the first thing we thought was "This was us 25-30 years ago. Trans kids in sports are today's version of fearing lesbian kids playing sports in the 90s." It takes a special kind of evil for adults to target kids in a vulnerable demographic.

All of that aside, regardless of what anyone thinks about trans kids in sports, all kids in school events--gay, straight, trans, black, white, New Mainer, 7th generation Mainer, rich, poor, or whatever should have the reasonable expectation that at school events, they are safe from adults trying to humiliate children online at those events. Heck, I've been at basketball games for my god-daughters and the refs wouldn't even allow negative talk from the parents in the stands. So why does a politician get a pass for humiliating another person's child online during a school event?

I could go into even more detail about the digital footprint that now is a lifelong burden of this high school student due to the actions of Laurel Libbey, but it should be enough that we all should agree that adults bullying school kids online, especially at school events, is inherently wrong--regardless of what they think about trans teens in sports.

I personally think it's ridiculous that legislation is needed to tell adults not to humiliate other people's children on social media. I keep thinking, "Is this really the school environment I am raising my children in? That they're not even safe at school events from bullying online by elected politicians?" But this is apparently a point we are at as a state and a nation. Please

move forward with this legislation to protect our underage school children from predatory adults.