

Brenda Franey
First Parish UU Portland
LD 260

Brenda Franey
South Portland
March 4, 2025

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

First, thank you all for your service to the state of Maine and its people. I write this testimony on behalf of LD 260 – the Maine Inclusive Equal Rights Amendment. My name is Brenda Franey. I live in South Portland and attend First Parish Unitarian Universalist in Portland.

Unitarians and Universalists have promoted the equal rights of women since the early 1800's as evidenced by Margaret Fuller's seminal work, "Woman in the Nineteenth Century", published in 1845. Margaret Fuller's words greatly influenced the suffrage movement; just as Lois Galgay Rickett influenced this piece of legislation. Early in 2019 Lois preached at First Parish and I was honored to assist in organizing this worship service. I remember asking her why we needed a constitutional amendment and she explained that laws and Acts (such as the Maine Human Rights Act) can be changed or repealed and legal precedent can be overturned. Prescient words indeed!

By enshrining the words of LD 260 into our state constitution, we protect the civil rights of ALL Maine citizens, regardless of whatever might happen on the federal level. So, please vote "ought to pass" on LD 260. Thank you for your consideration.