



March 04, 2025

Testimony in support of LD260: Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish That All Maine Residents Have Equal Rights Under the Law

Good afternoon Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Aluel Athian, and I'm a college student in Maine. I'm also a Legislative Fellow at Maine Youth Power, a youth-led movement fighting for human dignity and a livable future for all of Maine. Today, I'm here to urge you to support LD 260.

I sit before you to urge the passage of LD 260, which enshrines equal rights for any **individual in protected classes** in Maine's constitution. This amendment is not just a legal safeguard but a moral imperative. We still have much work to do to eradicate the racism, classism, homophobia, transphobia, and overall bigotry woven into this country's DNA. History shows us that oppression for one group opens the door for oppression for all. Minorities—Black, trans, and others were among the first targeted in fascist regimes, like Nazi Germany to manufacture consent.

We cannot allow such injustices to persist or continue to resurface. LD 260 provides new tools to address discrimination and civil rights violations that current laws cannot and will not fully remedy. This amendment ensures that even if statutes change, equal rights in Maine will be protected. LD 260 is a promise to current and future generations: that Maine will stand firm against discrimination in all of its forms. This is not a radical step, 29 states already have explicit Equal Rights Amendments. Let us make this commitment now. Pass LD 260 and affirm equal rights for everyone, not just some. Thank you.