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LD 1337

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak on this matter. I am testifying in opposition to LD 1337.

A fundamental concept of good governance is that for any bill to pass or new law to be made, it must demonstrate a clear need or a benefit to society. LD 1337 would needlessly permit discrimination against them when they are most in need, without justification. The false belief that trans women are men or that cis men will use being trans as a guise to gain entry to these facilities is a wholly imagined one, and I would challenge any Maine resident to find evidence of trans women, in our state or others, of having ever posed a risk to a cis woman in a shelter setting, period, let alone in a statistically meaningful way. There is no demonstrable elevated risk to cis women in having trans women present at a shelter.

For this bill to provide any perceived benefit, one must presume that one or more of the following is true:

- That trans women pose some form of threat to cis women
- That cis women do not pose a threat to other cis women
- That predatory cis men would abuse trans identity to prey on cis women

For any of these things to be true, we would need hard data indicating as such, when all available evidence points **DIRECTLY CONTRARY** to these positions. In fact, cis women are, for instance, more likely to sexually assault one another in prison settings than trans women are likely to sexually assault **ANYONE** in **ANY** setting, with one study showing inmate-on-inmate sexual assault in women's prisons having a prevalence of a whopping 21.3% incidence rate over a 6-month period. Given this information, we can clearly see that not only do we have zero evidence of trans women posing a threat to cis women, **NOR** do we have evidence of cis men masquerading as trans women to access these spaces, we have direct evidence that cis women are not inherently safe from other cis women. On these bases we have no way in which the proposed bill may be read as providing a meaningful benefit or any justification for stripping trans women of protection under the law, and LD 1337 should be soundly rejected.