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LD 1704

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Michelle Segovias, I'm a resident of Westbrook, and I am writing to you on behalf of myself and my family. I am writing in opposition of the bills before the committee today.

As a member of the LGBTQ+ community, the transgender individuals I know would be greatly and negatively impacted by the series of bills before you today. The trans children in my life want an opportunity to grow, learn, and play, free from persecution and hurtful vitriol. I have seen tremendous growth in the trans children I know who participate in sport; they have learned teamwork, gained confidence, and made friends.

The bills before you should fail due to the fact that trans children are no more likely to win or lose than their peers, trans children deserve health care specific to their needs just like any other child with specific health care needs, and trans children who are not in homes where it is safe for them to be out, should find refuge in their schools and community. On this specific issue I take serious note. About 5% of kids in foster care identify as transgender; but make up only 1% of kids not in foster care. Transgender children are also far more likely to attempt suicide. This is not because transgender children are inherently less happy than their cisgender peers, but instead due to the bigotry and transphobia that exists within our society. Bills such as these before you perpetuate this transphobia and hatred.

Lastly, as a member of the LGBTQ community I know we have seen all of this before. Having to listen to people debate your humanity is something I hope no one ever has to sit through. It is hard to have a louder more loving and kinder voice in your head to combat the homophobic and transphobic rhetoric. My hope for this current generation of LGBTQ+ children is that they are surrounded by people who affirm and uplift them so that the voices they hear are that they are loved, worthy of love and kindness, and are enough.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on these bills. Thank you!