

Erin Bache
Old Town
LD 1432

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

I greatly appreciate this opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Erin Bache, I'm a resident of Old Town, Maine, and am here to speak on behalf of myself and the transgender community. I am here in staunch opposition to LD1432, the Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identity from the Maine Human Rights Act.

This act asserts that myself, my friends, and the thousands of transgender people in Maine, no longer deserve to be named in the laws that are meant to protect us, and do currently protect other American demographic groups. This change is real- it will bring hardship to each and every day of our lives. This will affect transgender people's opportunity to participate in society on all levels, including whether or not we can go to our preferred doctors, jobs, living spaces, and interaction with the public. To remove gender identity protections could leave us vulnerable to the continued violence and subjugation that we are so used to.

That's because this bill takes us nowhere but backward in time. Discrimination is not abstract—it is deeply entangled with American history and you ALL surely know, when we look back, our darkest days come when we hurt other human beings for things they cannot change. Living here, up until now, has allowed me the freedom to be myself. Maine's position on gender affirming care and protective legislature have allowed me to begin a fully functional life, get a full-time job, and find love just like I wanted, and just like we all want. We just need you to keep us safe. When we are kept safe and treated as normal, we flourish; it's that simple.

Removing "gender identity" from the Maine Human Rights Act would not protect anyone—it would only divide Maine further, hurting real people, and weakly bending the knee the unlawful discrimination pushed on us by the executive branch. The personal safety, social lives, and autonomy of me and my friends are in your hands today. Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I ask you to vote "Ought Not to Pass" on this bill.
Thank you.