

Camille Reppert  
Portland, ME  
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Dear Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Camille Reppert, and I am writing in opposition of the bills proposed before the committee today. As a soon-to-be LGBTQ+ physician (on May 17<sup>th</sup>), I have seen the effects of anti-trans rhetoric first-hand in my work and interactions with patients. I am writing to express my strong opposition to **LD 1337**, an Act to amend the Maine Human Rights Act concerning female athletes and safety in women's single-sex shelters. While I understand the bill's intent to address concerns about safety in shelters and fairness in sports, I believe its provisions would unfairly harm vulnerable populations, violate principles of inclusivity, and set a harmful precedent for discrimination against transgender individuals.

### **1. Discrimination in Shelters**

First, I am deeply concerned about the provision that exempts certain shelters from the definition of "place of public accommodation." This could allow these shelters to deny access to transgender women who deserve safety, especially in emergency situations. Transgender women are at higher risk of violence and discrimination, and many are already facing challenges in accessing safe and supportive shelters. By exempting facilities from the Maine Human Rights Act's protections, we risk pushing transgender individuals into even more unsafe and isolating conditions. Gender-inclusive shelters provide critical support for transgender women who, like all women, may face urgent situations requiring a safe space.

Moreover, these shelters already have established protocols to ensure the safety and dignity of all individuals, regardless of gender identity. The idea that shelters would be required to turn away transgender women is not only dangerous but also counterproductive to the goal of providing safety for those most in need. I strongly urge lawmakers to reject any provision that would increase barriers to safety for transgender individuals.

### **2. Impact on Female Athletes and Title IX**

Second, the provision related to female athletes and Title IX raises significant concerns. Title IX is a federal law that has played a pivotal role in ensuring equal opportunities for women in education and sports. The intent of Title IX is to eliminate gender-based discrimination, but the language in this bill could unintentionally undermine the protections that Title IX offers to all women, particularly transgender women.

It is crucial to ensure that all athletes, regardless of their gender identity, have equal access to fair competition and opportunities. The bill's language could lead to legal challenges that disproportionately affect transgender women athletes, limiting their participation in sports based solely on their gender identity. This creates unnecessary divisions and reduces opportunities for inclusion in an area where fair and respectful competition should be the focus.

Rather than restricting participation, we should work toward policies that protect all women's rights to participate in sports, ensuring fair competition, while also being inclusive and respectful of gender identity.

### **3. Broader Implications for Equality and Human Rights**

LD 1337 risks creating a divide that could make it easier for discrimination to take root, undermining the values of fairness, equality, and human dignity that the Maine Human Rights Act upholds. Discriminating against transgender individuals, particularly in places of emergency shelter or public accommodation, sends a harmful message that their rights are secondary to others.

Transgender individuals deserve the same respect, safety, and opportunity as anyone else. Laws that protect people from discrimination are meant to ensure that no one is treated as less than another, and LD 1337 undermines this principle by creating distinctions based on gender identity that are unnecessary and harmful.

### **Conclusion**

For these reasons, I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on **LD 1337**. Instead of creating further division, I ask that we work together to promote inclusivity and protect the rights of all individuals, including transgender women, in both shelters and sports. Thank you for your time and for considering this important issue.