

Meghan Gardner

Orono, Maine

May 8, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Meghan Gardner, and I live in Orono, Maine. I am a parent, an advocate, and a former athlete, and I am here to speak in strong opposition to LD 868.

This bill is a direct attack on transgender and non-binary students in Maine. It would ban trans girls from participating in school sports and bar trans and non-binary students from using the bathrooms and locker rooms that match their gender identity. It is invasive, discriminatory, and dangerous.

As a parent, I have watched my ten-year-old daughter play sports alongside trans teammates. These kids are not theoretical — they are real children who show up, work hard, and want to be part of a team. What this bill would teach my daughter is that some of her friends deserve to be excluded or humiliated simply for being themselves. That is not the lesson I want her to learn.

The Legislature needs to understand that LD 868 is part of a national political agenda that is using trans youth as a wedge to roll back civil rights. Maine must not allow fear and misinformation from outside our state to dictate how we treat our kids.

LD 868 violates both state and federal constitutional guarantees of equal protection. Discriminating against transgender students is sex discrimination, and therefore a violation of Title IX. Maine's own Human Rights Act has included gender identity protections since 2005. This bill would undermine those protections and put our schools at risk of legal challenge and loss of federal funding.

But more importantly, it would harm kids. It would isolate trans and non-binary students, create unsafe school environments, and empower bullies by giving them the weight of law. It would force educators into impossible positions and pull resources away from what actually makes schools safe: inclusion, trust, and respect.

If passed, this bill would do lasting damage. It will not make our schools safer. It will not make sports more fair. It will only hurt children who already face too many barriers to being fully seen and accepted.

I urge you to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 868. Reject this effort to strip away the rights and dignity of Maine students. Stand with families like mine and send a clear message that our laws are guided by care, not cruelty.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Meghan Gardner