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LD 233

I am writing to ask that you reject LD 233: An Act to Prohibit Biological Males from Participating in School Athletic Programs and Activities Designated for Females When State Funding Is Provided to the School.

Extracurricular activities are a healthy and vital element of the school experience, and the more children who participate in these activities, the better a school's climate. It should be the role of schools to create a supportive environment where every student can receive an education and participate in whatever activities are available, not police all female participants out of fear of a baseless moral panic, subjecting those girls to invasive interrogation or exposing them public ridicule. Banning trans women from playing sports would invite any person to call for an invasive or traumatizing "gender check" on any girl who wants to play sports if she does not conform to their expectations of appearance or behavior, violating the privacy and bodily autonomy of all women and girls.

Bans will encourage bullying by spectators, community members, and fellow competitors--a problem that is already endemic in Maine's high school sports communities and which should not be exacerbated. Proponents claim to be "protecting women" with these outrageous bans, but really all they're doing is trying to harm the most vulnerable members of society and expose all girls and women to scrutiny, harassment, and bullying. If you want to help girls and women, expand and fully fund reproductive health care, from menses through menopause, including birth control, abortion, pregnancy and childbirth; provide funding for childcare, education, and eldercare; close the wage gap between the sexes; and create real, prosecutable penalties for sexual discrimination, harassment, and assault. Please reject this cruel bill.