

Lynn Mansfield
Durham, Maine
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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Lynn Mansfield, I am a resident of Durham, and I serve as the Executive Director of Temple Beth El, a Conservative synagogue that serves families from across Southern Maine. I am testifying today in strong opposition to the anti-transgender bills before you—bills that would restrict student participation in school sports, limit access to restrooms, and weaken vital protections in the Maine Human Rights Act.

At Temple Beth El, we affirm that every human being is created *b'tzelem Elohim*—in the image of God. Our congregation includes families with trans and nonbinary children, and our Social Kashrut policy guides us to create spaces that uphold dignity, equity, and belonging for all people. These bills undermine that vision. They promote exclusion, fear, and shame—none of which belong in our schools or communities.

We know that these proposals would not make schools safer. They would instead expose all children—especially girls—to increased surveillance and scrutiny. These policies don't just target transgender youth; they make any student vulnerable who doesn't conform to rigid expectations of gender. The impact would be far-reaching, and deeply harmful.

Our schools and athletic associations already have thoughtful guidelines in place. What's being proposed here is not about fairness—it's about using political fear-mongering to divide and harm. We reject that approach. As Jews, as Mainers, and as people of conscience, we are called to protect the most vulnerable among us—not legislate their exclusion.

I urge you to vote Ought Not to Pass on these bills. Maine's children deserve to be safe, affirmed, and free to participate fully in their schools and communities.

Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to share my testimony.