



**Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary
LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms,
Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and
Postsecondary Schools**

May 8, 2025

**Beth Parlato
Independent Women's Law Center**

Dear Members of Joint Committee on Judiciary,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of LD 868.

My name is Beth Parlato, and I'm submitting this testimony on behalf of Independent Women's Law Center, where I serve as Senior Legal Advisor. Independent Women fights for women by expanding support for policy solutions that aren't just well intended, but actually enhance freedom, opportunities, and well-being. We are also the authors of the [Stand with Women Act](#), which is the sex-definition and preservation of female spaces model legislation that has been implemented across the country.

Bureaucrats and elitists on the state level are redefining language to fit a false narrative, all designed to erase that women exist as biologically distinct from men. As a result, women and girls across the country have been forced to sacrifice their opportunities, privacy, and safety.

LD 868 would stop this sort of interpretive overreach and judicial activism by preserving the legal existence of women, as distinct from men.

This bill does so in two ways. First, it clarifies the long-standing meaning of sex-based words like 'woman,' and 'female,' already used in 43 Maine state statutes. Second, it provides legal protection to defend women's single-sex spaces and athletic opportunities.

LD 868 reflects recent action on the federal level that restores biological reality and protects sex-based rights by recognizing that there are only two sexes, male and female. Additionally, a federal district court ruling recently struck down the past presidential administration's attempt to redefine 'sex' in Title IX to include 'gender identity'—vacating the unlawful regulations nationwide and ensuring the original meaning of Title IX is preserved across the country, including Maine. Maine must follow suit by passing LD 868.

Recent action on the federal level safeguarding women's rights is encouraging, but is not enough to ensure the rights of women and girls in Maine are upheld. Maine must take action.

Similar legislation as LD 868 has received bipartisan support across the United States. Recent [polling](#) proves that Americans overwhelmingly agree that Maine has an important governmental interest in preventing sex discrimination and preserving single-sex spaces and opportunities. But we cannot fight sex discrimination if we cannot define 'sex.'

Efforts to legally eradicate the difference between the sexes fundamentally erases women by depriving them of their dignity, safety, and well-being. Men and women are biologically different and as such have a legal right to single-sex spaces and opportunities.

In summary, LD 868 does an excellent job to define male and female terms and protect women's private spaces. It does not create any special rights for women nor does it take rights away from others. It simply safeguards women's existing legal right to have single-sex spaces to ensure privacy and safety. This bill is a sharp rebuke to the efforts to legally eradicate the difference between the sexes and fundamentally erase women by depriving them of their dignity, safety, and well-being. Men and women are biologically different and as such have a legal right to single-sex spaces.

LD 868 would ensure women and girls in Maine never have to face discrimination for wanting to have their own sports and spaces. Please stand with women and support LD 868 today.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Beth Parlato

Beth Parlato

Senior Legal Advisor

Independent Women Law Center