

Kara Potter
Washington
LD 1337

Kara Potter
Washington, ME
04574

May 6, 2025

Greetings Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to share my testimony with you.

My name is Kara Potter and I'm sharing my hopes that you'll vote against letting this bill, LD 1337: An Act to Amend the Maine Human Rights Act Regarding Female Athletes and Safety in Women's Single-sex Shelters out of committee. This bill would exempt privately owned shelters providing emergency service to women from anti-discrimination requirements as detailed in the Maine Human Rights Act (MHRA). This bill also amends the MHRA to align with Federal Title IX analysis related to rights of female athletes.

It seems to me that proposing this type of legislation in this particular moment, when things have been settled for 20 years, is capitulating to federal overreach.

We know that trans women in Maine already face serious barriers to accessing appropriate shelter—not to mention disproportionate risks of violence—when they are unhoused. Shelters know how to keep all women safe and have been doing it for years.

As a parent of 3, and a former female student myself, I can see these bans empower schools to engage in policing adherence to gender norms, which unfairly scrutinizes girls' bodies, and have been shown to affect girls of color even more. These bans will cause fear, distrust, and confusion for students, families, and educators.

We must continue to protect each and every Mainer's civil rights - especially in this moment when many at the federal level are threatening to take them away.

Rolling back the Maine Human Rights Act could open us all up to further attacks on our civil rights at the hands of our current federal government in which it seems no one is safe unless you fully support them. This is not something we should be considering at this time. I hope you'll vote "Ought Not to Pass" on LD 1337.

Thank you for your time.