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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 Anne Callender and I am a resident of Portland, and I am writing on behalf of humanity and protecting the most vulnerable.

I am in opposition of the bills before the committee today.

What is the purpose of not accepting a child's chosen name and how they want to be addressed. Legalized bullying? Required disrespect? Shameful disregard for someone else's humanity? Don't legalize bigotry and discrimination. This bill is BS and undermines everyone's civil rights.

I can't think of anything more vile than enacting laws to discriminate against children and in turn teaching them how to be disrespectful of others. Schools should be places that foster community, respect, kindness, empathy and compassion. The key components of safe environments for education and growth. Not all children or people are the same, and we all have different needs. These bills are not fixing a problem, they are creating space for bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Biology is not black or white, there are many colors in the crayon box. As much as some folks want to proclaim there are only two sexes, that's not reality. Maine understands this reality and adopted protections for gender identity in 2005. For the happiness and safety for everyone, we need to keep it that way.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on these bills. Don't let hate have a home here in Maine.