

Wanda Stahl
Wells
LD 380

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the committee.

I am Rev. Dr. Wanda Stahl, a lifelong Mainer currently residing in Wells, ordained United Methodist Clergy and retired professor from Boston University School of Theology. I am writing in opposition to LD 380.

I have worked with transgender colleagues, students, and parishioners for decades. I have been blessed and enriched by their stories and their presence in my life, and their contributions to the institutions I have served. Over these years, I have heard many heartbreaking stories of rejection, bullying, and other forms of violence and discrimination. I have also listened to students and colleagues who have been on the receiving end of such behaviors because they “looked” or “acted” like they were transgendered.

From my years serving as a professor in a theological school with a significant number of transgender persons, I know a supportive community is important for allowing people to thrive. A diverse community with equal access to opportunities for ALL benefits everyone. This certainly must be true of access to adequate health care.

All persons should have access to the health care they need. Not only would this bill jeopardize the health and well-being of transgendered persons, it would also put a further strain on our healthcare infrastructure. LD 380 would open health care providers to possible prosecution from out-of-state entities for providing health care that is legal in the state. Maine state law has allowed doctors and patients to safely give and receive care. Health care providers would be harmed by this bill.

In addition, given the large number of economic, environmental, and health related issues facing our state, devoting this level of attention to attacking a small, marginalized population of people seems a poor use of time and energy.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective. I urge you to vote “Ought not to pass” on this bill.