

Casey Knight
Auburn
LD 233

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee, My name is Casey Knight, I'm a resident of Auburn, and I am here as a long time recreational soccer and basketball coach for the city of Auburn where over the years I coached a number of adolescents who were gender nonconforming, some whom later transitioned, all whose lives were improved by being able to play ball. I am here today in deep-seated opposition of the bills before the committee on this day. Banning transgender girls from participating in sports invites ridicule of outliers like my younger self, a 6 foot tall cisgendered girl who was judged "too tall" to be a girl. Gender norms are not something that each one of us are biologically born to fit into. When I was in Ukraine in 2018 to adopt a 16-year-old, I was taken aside a government building by non-english speaking people and harassed for my build. Ukraine, I had been warned was a country with no human rights laws, and due to my stature and affiliations I was questioned. My then husband, was quite a bit shorter than I and the Ukrainian officials were perplexed by my size and insinuated that perhaps I was transgender, born male for how else would I be so tall. They looked at my paperwork, took my passport, and asked what was under my clothing, mimed for me to lift my skirt. I tried to describe that I had birthed three children. I turned scarlet as I silhouetted my chest and mimed a bulging belly. My height and size 11.5 men's feet are not my choice. What I went through then could very well become a norm not only for transgender girls but for many girls who do not fit into societies mold. This ban would violate all of Maine's women and girls and subject each of us to scrutiny of gender standards and norms that are impossible to fit into. It is obvious that some politicians are using vulnerable transgender athletes as an avenue to further the agenda to roll back long fought for aspects of civil rights including those of indigenous people, queer people, people of color, women, and immigrants. Your voice is the way to make sure that this rising tide of prejudice does not become a throwback to the genocide of my Jewish ancestors. Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on these bills. Thank you!