

Cheryl Seymour
Hallowell
LD 233

To: Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and members of the Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary

From: Cheryl K. Seymour MD, Hallowell ME 04347

Re: Opposition to LD 223, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, LD 1704, LD 1337, LD1432, and LD 380

I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed legislation listed above.

I am a family physician who has lived and worked in Maine for the past twenty years. I am also a parent to three children who attend public schools and participate in youth sports.

I have been providing primary health care to people in central Maine on a daily basis for the entirety of my career. I and my colleagues counsel and care for people with issues such as high blood pressure and depression, as well as erectile dysfunction, addiction, unintended pregnancy and gender dysphoria. Though the latter issues are often stigmatized and used as flash points for political or moral debate, physicians have been providing medical care for people with all of these concerns for decades. We do not tend to advertise our patients' health concerns or the breadth of our clinical training; however, with the rise of misinformation and discrimination against transgender people, I feel obligated to share our knowledge and perspective.

Specifically, these policy statements from the American Academy of Family Physicians guide our daily practice and patient care:

- Diversity in gender identity and expression is a normal part of the human existence and does not represent pathology.
- Gender-affirming health care is part of comprehensive primary care.
- The full spectrum of gender-affirming care should be legal and should remain a treatment decision between a physician and their patient.

The eight bills before the Judiciary Committee today directly and specifically limit the rights and safety of transgender people. I object to any legislation that attempts to define sex or gender in a manner that over-rides the knowledge and experience of the individual or their health care providers. In addition, I strongly oppose amendments to the Maine Human Rights Act that eliminate protection against discrimination based on gender identity.

I understand health to be something experienced not only in physical bodies but also in the sense of safety, dignity and belonging that is created in community. Physicians need the assistance of the people of Maine and you, their representatives, to promote and protect the health of all people. Please reject efforts to curtail human rights in our state and oppose legislation that limits the rights of transgender people.