

May 8, 2025

Testimony Opposing LD 1432: An Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identity from the Maine Human Rights Act

Chairpersons, members of the committee, and distinguished legislators,

My name is Karen MacDonald, and I am writing to express my strong opposition to LD 1432, a bill that would remove consideration of gender identity from the Maine Human Rights Act.

The Maine Human Rights Act exists to ensure that every individual—regardless of who they are—is protected from discrimination in public life. LD 1432 would fundamentally undermine that mission. By stripping away explicit protections for transgender and nonbinary individuals, this bill invites exclusion and harm against some of our most vulnerable neighbors.

Transgender people in Maine—and across the country—already face disproportionately high rates of violence, job loss, homelessness, and discrimination in healthcare and education. Removing these protections tells trans Mainers that they are not worthy of dignity, safety, or equality under the law. It would send a devastating message: that Maine no longer values fairness, compassion, or civil rights for all.

This is not just a matter of state policy; it is a matter of moral and legal responsibility. Courts and national legal standards increasingly affirm that gender identity is protected under anti-discrimination laws. Maine has long been a leader in human rights and inclusion. To walk backwards now would be to abdicate that leadership.

Passing LD 1432 would not just erase words from a statute—it would erase the lived experiences and legal protections of real people. I urge you to reject this bill and affirm the rights of all Mainers, including transgender and nonbinary individuals, to live free from discrimination.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to justice.

Sincerely,

Karen MacDonald

Westbrook, Maine

2014 Maine Teacher of the Year

