

Marianne McHugh-Westfall
Lewiston
LD 1432

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

Marianne McHugh-Westfall
Lewiston, Maine
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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 Marianne McHugh-Westfall. I'm a resident of Lewiston, and I am here on behalf of Equality Maine. I am here today in opposition to LD 1432: An Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identity from the Maine Human Rights Act.

As a transgender woman, I am aware that there are many people who would like to discriminate against me and anyone else who is different from the majority. However, I have been lucky to live in a state with strong protections against discrimination that allow me to live my life freely and contribute positively to my community as a worker, a volunteer, and a mother of an amazing two and a half year old daughter. Removing the protection for gender identity from the Maine Human Rights Act—protection which has been in place for twenty years—will be a green light to begin stripping protection for other categories. It will not end with gender identity. We have seen before that discrimination against the smallest minorities in society only leads to more discrimination. Please do not open the door to forces of hate. I urge you to vote ought not to pass on this bill.