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

Thank you to the committee for the opportunity to address the group today. My name is Rylan Hynes of Hallowell, and I am a member of Maine's transgender community. LD 233, An Act to Prohibit Biological Males from Participating in School Athletic Programs and Activities Designated for Females When State Funding Is Provided to the School, is one of many proposals that is being considered today attacking transgender Mainers, and I am writing to express my staunch opposition to this bill.

We have already seen, on the national stage, how Maine's laws and policies protecting the transgender community and youth access to sports have been used by the current presidential administration to abuse the distribution of federal funding. And, thanks to Governor Janet Mills, we have already seen how flimsy that argument is. This bill is a localized symptom of a broader effort to dehumanize transgender people, painting us as a dangerous, violent, aggressive, and ambitious opposing team, when in fact, we are all simply Mainers who deserve the same respect and consideration as everyone else—no matter our age.

What happened to teaching our youth about sportsmanship? Working together as a team, even if your sporting event is more solitary? Respecting your opponent on the field, even if you aren't on the same side? Supporting your fellow players, even when they make mistakes? Learning how to be a positive role model for your peers as a team captain? And, perhaps most importantly, shaking hands at the end of a match, saying 'good game,' even if you did not win?

These are lessons that every child should have access to, regardless of their identity. And we should not be punishing schools that welcome everyone onto the playing field.

Bills like LD 233 portray young people in black and white terms that are reductive in insidious, scientifically inaccurate ways. As if sex assigned at birth were the only factor that determines someone's agility, speed, strength, coordination; good communication skills or the willingness to work together to achieve a goal.

There is little to no statistically significant data to suggest that the presence of transgender girls or women in sports, even on the professional level, pose a threat to cisgender women competing in those same sports. What there is statistical evidence of are the following:

- [Transgender people are 4x more likely than cisgender people to be the victims of a violent crime](#)
- [47% of transgender people have been sexually assaulted during their lives](#)
- [From 2023 to 2024, at least 36 trans, nonbinary, or gender expansive people were murdered in the United States](#)
- [46% of transgender and nonbinary youth have seriously considered suicide in the past year](#)

[- 45% of transgender and nonbinary young people and their families have considered relocating to a state with more hospitable LGBTQ+ policies](#)

Maine is currently one of those states. To remain so, this bill must not pass through this committee. There are a number of real, tangible challenges that Mainers are facing, such as lack of affordable housing, hospitals shutting down vital services and wards, recovering from and preparing for extreme weather events, workplace wages not keeping up with the rising cost of living, and ensuring that each home and community in Maine has clean, safe drinking water—these are all issues that deserve our immediate attention.

The debate around which children should be able to participate in school sports is a non-issue that has been inflated into a nationwide moral panic, pulling time, resources, and energy away from solving actual problems.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you all today. I hope I can count on you to vote "ought not to pass" on LD 233.

— Rylan Hynes