

Ellen Smith-Erb

Cumberland, Maine

5/07/2025 for 5/08/2025 testimony

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

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee.

My name is Ellen Smith-Erb and I'm a resident of Cumberland.

I am in opposition of the bills before the committee on 5/08/2025.

I have been a licensed clinical social worker for over 30 years, and have had a private practice for ten years in Yarmouth. I've worked with LGBTQ youth in my community including trans teenagers.

Teenagers in the LGBTQ community have a higher suicide rate, a higher rate of anxiety and depression, a higher rate of eating disorders and a higher rate of dropping out of school. 28% of trans and gender diverse individuals have postponed medical care when sick or injured due to discrimination and/or disrespect in the healthcare environment.

The trans teens that would be impacted by these bills are a vulnerable population. There are trans youth that face discrimination from their families, peers and community on a daily basis. As adults we must protect the rights of trans teens, we must let them know they are important and they belong in their schools and are welcome to participate in extracurricular activities. We need to support and protect our trans youth and these bills do not.

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.