

Ought Not to Pass - Testimony
Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary

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Portland, 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. I submit this written testimony in opposition to eight bills before you today: LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, LD 1704, LD 1337, LD 1432, and LD 380. These bills are cruel, harmful, and poor public policy; they are the opposite of what Mainers stand for, as I am sure you will see today by the number of people passionately urging you to vote **Ought Not to Pass** for all eight of the bills.

I am not transgender. However, many of the people I love are transgender, and the world is a better and brighter place with all of them in it, in the full depth and breadth of their identities. The world is a stunningly diverse place far beyond our comprehension or control. Or, as Shakespeare put it, "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,/Than are dreamt of in your philosophy." Trans people have always been here, they always will be here, and they have just as much of a right to exist and thrive and pursue their dreams as anyone else. This Legislature should not deny their humanity.

Trans people are not hurting or oppressing others in bathrooms or locker rooms. This is just not an actual problem that exists in the world, but rather a disingenuous right-wing boogeyman that is distracting us from the many legitimate problems we should be addressing. I am a cisgender woman and I have never felt unsafe around a trans person in a bathroom. However, I have (as have all of the women I know) felt unsafe around cisgender men in elevators, on sidewalks, and in various other public places. There are plenty of worthy organizations in Maine doing essential work to address toxic gender dynamics, and all of them stand against these bigoted bills.

I am the parent of a four-year-old, and there is one message I want to convey to my child above all others: that I will *a/ways* love and support my child - gay, straight, trans, cis - it truly does not matter. I cannot imagine trying to force my child to inhabit an identity that feels wrong and harmful in order to win my love or acceptance. And it breaks my heart to think that we are doing that to *any* of our kids. We are all responsible to and for the next generation, and they deserve the very best we can give them. That includes voting **Ought Not to Pass** on LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, LD 1704, LD 1337, LD 1432, and LD 380.

Thank you for your consideration and for your work on behalf of all Mainers.