

Marika Marland
Portland
LD 233

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

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Marika Marland and I am a resident of Portland Maine and went to school in Portland from kindergarten to highschool. I have been a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner working in Maine for 17 years. I am in opposition of the bills before the committee today.

I also want to add a personal concern regarding LD 233 regarding girls sports. I am partially disabled and thus am limited in my ability physically in some aspects. However when I went to school in Portland my classmates were supportive and encouraged me to succeed in the sports I tried even if I ultimately did not continue in them. I am very concerned about any laws that would exclude any child based on perceived ability or inability to participate in sports. There is no conclusive evidence that trans children perform better or worse in sports. But my concern is that once perceived ability to play in sports is a basis for who can play in general school sports teams, who will be refused this healthy avenue to be physically active, learn about teamwork and connect with children their age? What would we be teaching our children by excluding other children? In my mind it goes against the spirit of cooperation sports are supposed to foster.

If this law passed, what precedent would we set in excluding children based on perceived physical ability from group physical activity? We don't exclude children with higher or lower intellectual ability from participating in general academics. Why would there be any difference with sports? Why would we deny our children the right to be healthy and share experiences with their peers?

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote “Ought not to Pass” on LD 233. Thank you.