

Dolphin Avery Grubel  
Sedgwick Maine 04676

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee, I write to you to express my complete opposition to LD 233-Id868, LD1002, LD1134, LD 1704, LD 1337, LD 1432, and LD380

My name is Dolphin Avery-Grubel. I am a LCPC-C (Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor-conditional) who works in the local school districts, counseling children. I am concerned for the consequences of these bills. As a professional counselor I have seen what happens to children who are unable to express their gender identity. When a person experiences a strong preference to express themselves as the gender that is different than their birth and is supported in expressing their authentic gender, it is possible for them to live a generally harmonious life. However, for those that are shamed and told they are only allowed to express themselves as the gender they were born as, it results in a deep sense that they do not belong, which leads to depression, anxiety, and at its worst, suicidal ideation and suicide. I have experienced firsthand the pain that these individuals feel when they are shamed and unsupported.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition, Text Revision (DSM-5-TR) states that suicide attempts for transgender individuals are reported to range from 30% to 80%. Adolescents referred to gender clinics have substantially higher rates of suicidal thoughts and behaviors when compared with non-referred adolescence. Prior to receiving gender-affirming treatment and legal gender reassignment adolescence and adults with gender dysphoria are at increased risk for suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts (DSM -5-TR p.518).

I understand that people are scared and these laws are believed, by some, to be protecting kids. But please understand that transgender people are not criminal people trying to sneak into bathrooms to hurt someone. They are not cheaters who just want an easy way to win a gold medal. They are human beings. They are trying to find a place in the world to live safely and authentically. They go through an immense amount of struggle to be authentic. Transgender people who receive gender affirming care are always placed into counseling services, certain steps have to be taken that take time, and these things are not taken lightly. People diagnosed with gender dysphoria are given thorough psychiatric tests. Nothing about this process is quick, easy, or flippant. Supporting transgender people helps to save lives.

These bills will not keep anyone safe. They will do the opposite for transgender people and anyone who does not look stereotypically gender conforming.

Thank you for your time

*Dolphin Avery-Grubel*

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LD 380

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