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LD 233

Dear members of the Judiciary Committee,

When I look at all of these anti-trans bills that demonize transgender students and adults, I cringe thinking about a student friend that my husband and I supported twenty-five years ago. He was a wonderful and talented young person grappling with his gender identity. He had no family support, except for his little sister, and heard loud and clear from society that something was wrong with him.

This rejection and lack of respect left him depressed and anxious and pushed him toward self-abuse... 'cutting'. We feared that he would commit suicide, and one night we took him to the ER because of concern for his safety. His academic success suffered in high school and college. After a semester in college, he had to drop out. Eventually, with lots of support from many friends and with medical guidance he found his way.

Now, she finished her degree, is successfully employed and writes and performs music on the side. But after the November election, she knew that she was no longer safe in this country, her home, and moved overseas. What a shame, when Maine is desperate to retain young, smart and productive people.

Why does the prejudice of a small group have such an influence on the lives of others? Why is it anyone's business how people identify or express their gender? Why should anyone feel threatened by how people identify or express their gender? The issues addressed in these bills are non-issues. They are just being used as political devices to divide people.

Support from schools, family and community are absolutely life-saving. I urge you not to abandon these young people. Please vote ought-not-to-pass on all of these bills.

Sincerely,  
Christina Rusnov