

May 8th, 2025

Aleah Starr
Portland, Maine

Assistant Principal of Teaching & Learning
South Portland Middle School
South Portland, Maine

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

My name is Aleah Starr, and I am a resident of Portland and a school administrator in South Portland. I am writing today in opposition of all bills before the committee today.

As a public school administrator, it is my responsibility to ensure that my building is a safe place for *all* children. It is my responsibility to make sure that each student under my care feels as though they belong, can achieve their full potential, and is protected from harm. This is what the parents and guardians in my community expect of me: to love their children, to keep them safe, and to create (and protect) the conditions in which they can learn and grow.

Each of the bills before you is a direct attack on our public schools and what the students of Maine need and deserve them to be. Each piece of proposed legislation dictates which students get to feel safe, policies certain students' access to the activities and environments where they feel most successful, and hinders educators' ability to do the work we have promised our communities we will do for their children. We cannot promise our students that we will protect them from bullying and harm if we are expected to follow legislation that puts certain students—the trans and non-binary young people in our schools—directly in harm's way.

As a public school administrator, it is my greatest hope that my school will be a place where all young people feel as though they belong and can discover the people they want to be in the world. It is my hope that my school remains a place where students are free to exist without scrutiny over their bodies and with the space to explore their identities and passions.

Our trans and non-binary youth deserve *this* school.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AS' with a large loop and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Aleah Starr
Assistant Principal of Teaching & Learning
South Portland Middle School
South Portland, Maine