

Allison Brzezinski
Camden
LD 1704

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Camden, Maine
May 8, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to address this committee. My name is Allison Brzezinski (they/them), a trans/non-binary resident of Camden, Maine and I am here on behalf of my community. I am writing to share my opposition to all of the proposed bills that are intended to roll back protections for trans individuals.

Trans athletes should be allowed to participate in sports and utilize the restrooms, locker rooms and other essential facilities that align with their gender identity. Anything else is segregation pure and simple. It is discrimination based on bogus science, because regardless of what the current presidential administration may believe and promote, gender is real and different from biological sex. We are still only beginning to understand the importance that gender plays in the well being of individuals, especially our young people. An essential goal of educators is to teach empathy, understanding and open mindedness to differing experiences and perspectives. By implementing legislation such as this, the state would be writing prejudice into law.

This legislation equates transness to predatory practice and would enable an over-sexualization of young bodies. Neither of these are appropriate for educational settings or anywhere else. Fearmongering about trans people comes from baseless claims that do more harm to trans youth than any imagined danger trans youth pose to their cis gendered peers. This is purely bigoted ideology being presented as fact in the hopes of becoming policy.

Being trans is not a choice, so it is essential that we legislate support and inclusion for trans individuals for the benefit of trans youth and their cis peers. Anything less than that is dangerous.

This bill should not be allowed to pass. It diminishes human dignity from youth who are simply being themselves by participating in athletics and using restrooms, locker rooms and other basic facilities that align with their identity. The bill would have a devastating impact on the mental health of our young people. It is a quantifiable, proven fact that anti-trans legislation, such as this, has led to up to a 72% increase in suicide attempts amongst trans youth. If passed, this legislation would likely lead to an increase in this already daunting number for self harm and attempted suicide.

Nothing good can come from this legislation being passed in a trans refuge state at a time when anti-trans legislation is spreading at an exceedingly dangerous rate. Maine has been and should remain a state where trans individuals of all ages and backgrounds feel protected. Passing this legislation would be a regression for the state as it would no longer be protecting some of our most vulnerable community members. As a 36 year old trans/non-binary person, I have felt relatively safe knowing what protections have been made into law for my community.

If this legislation passes, my day to day life as a trans person will change dramatically as it will lead to further bigotry and vitriol towards the trans community. I shudder to think about the ripple effect this reversal in trans protections will mean for trans people of all ages.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on these bills as they will have a devastating impact for trans and cis students, youth and adults. Thank you!