

Sarah Gusky Kemer
New Gloucester
LD 1432

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

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. I'm Sarah and I have been a friend and coworker to multiple trans people in my life, throughout my life. I'm writing in opposition of the bills before the committee today.

Trans people are being used as scapegoats to invoke a false sense of equality towards women. I and many other cis women reject this attempt. Intersectional feminism teaches us that the multiple layers of identity we all hold, and all the various ways to be a woman, are valid and important. We welcome our trans sisters the same way we welcome those assigned female at birth.

All of these bills are dangerous for the same reason. Targeting a group of people with a ban opens up the opportunity to target everyone. These bans empower schools to engage in policing adherence to gender norms, which unfairly scrutinizes girls' bodies, and have been shown to affect girls of color even more. These bans will cause fear, distrust, and confusion for students, families, and educators. Anti-trans activists are seeking broad exclusion of a vulnerable group of students with a one-size-fits-all rule even though individuals are different. Some people are using trans athletes as a weapon to further an agenda to roll back civil rights of LGBTQ people, people of color, women, immigrants, and many others.

Furthermore these bills violate state and federal laws, including the Maine Human Rights Act, which has protected gender identity for 20 years. Bills that discriminate against transgender students violate both state and federal constitutional guarantees of equal protection. LD 233, LD 868, and LD 1134 in particular are discriminatory on the basis of sex and therefore are not constitutional. It's notable that no one cared about the fact that Maine has been protecting gender identity until trans folks became the latest scapegoat.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on these bills.

Thank you, Sarah