

Ally Johnson  
Portland  
LD 1704

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

My name is Ally Johnson, and I'm a lifelong Mainer and have lived in Portland for the last five years. I am writing on behalf of trans youth throughout our state and am therefore adamant in opposition to the bills before the committee today.

LD 1704 seeks to restrict kids from finding places and participating in activities where they might fight for safety and community. Bills that discriminate against transgender students violate both state and federal constitutional guarantees of equal protection. These types of bans embolden peers, spectators, and community members to bully and harass students for the simple act of being their true selves.

As humans - as adults in this community - it is our responsibility to push back against such abusive proposals that would strip trans and non-binary youth of their safety and happiness. Proposals that will undoubtedly have severe effects.

And to those of you who suggest that it is a small population of people who will be affected by these bills - in and of itself a cruel, callous means of diminishing a population of people, young people - ask yourself, who is next? Who next will we be happy to dismiss, demean, and dehumanize?

Thank you for letting me share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on this bill.

Ally