

Joshua Elwood
Bangor
LD 1704

My name is Joshua Elwood, I am a Bangor resident and voter writing to oppose any bills that prohibit trans youth from competing in sports or using restrooms aligning with their gender identity. Trans youth deserve to have their autonomy, privacy, and self-expression respected by school administrators and state lawmakers. Students who are assigned male or female at birth but identify differently should not be harassed or subject to invasive searches. I oppose LD 1704.

To quote from the well-informed local advocacy group, Equality Maine, “Policing who is or isn’t a “girl” through any type of sex verification testing — whether it’s a blood or a DNA test, or child being forced to undergo a genital exam— is a disturbing, deeply inappropriate violation of privacy, and puts all young people at risk of sexual abuse. These practices unfairly scrutinize girls’ and non-binary people’s bodies, and have been shown to disproportionately impact girls of color. These bills would embolden sports spectators, members of the public, and students to harass and scrutinize girls who may not conform to stereotypical feminine appearances. If these bills pass, they will become another weapon for bullies to use against all young people in Maine.

This legislation will actively harm all youth in sports, and would promote cruelty instead of fairness. It will sow fear, distrust and confusion in schools across the state, and put a target on the backs of a small group of vulnerable students who already receive a great deal of hostility..... Bills that discriminate against transgender students violate both state and federal constitutional guarantees of equal protection.”