

Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine

Augusta, Maine

May 8, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Tam Thanh Thi Huynh, and I present this testimony on behalf of the Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine, a statewide organization committed to universal human rights through education and Holocaust remembrance. We work extensively in school communities, fostering learning through education programs rooted in historical references to dignity, inclusion, and justice for all people.

My testimony today is in strong opposition to the suite of anti-transgender bills under consideration, including LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, and LD 1704. These proposals not only marginalize an already vulnerable population—transgender youth—but also pose a direct threat to their civil liberties, bodily autonomy, and educational equity.

These bills represent a troubling regression. LD 233 and LD 1134 seek to bar transgender girls from participating in school sports consistent with their gender identity. LD 868 and LD 1704 would prohibit transgender and nonbinary students from accessing restrooms and changing rooms that align with who they are. LD 1002 imposes bureaucratic and deeply invasive requirements for students to be recognized by their affirmed name or gender. Each of these measures isolates, stigmatizes, and effectively erases transgender youth from the public sphere.

To be clear, these bills violate fundamental rights. Maine has protected individuals based on gender identity since 2005 under the Maine Human Rights Act. These proposals would override those protections and defy constitutional guarantees of equal protection under the law. They would empower schools to scrutinize and police students' identities in ways that are not only discriminatory but also traumatic—particularly for transgender girls, who already face disproportionately high rates of bullying, exclusion, and self-harm.

The Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine is deeply concerned by the precedent these bills would set. They normalize the idea that some students are less worthy of safety, dignity, and belonging. We have seen where dehumanization begins with laws that single out and target minorities under the guise of fairness or protection. As an institution rooted in remembrance of historical injustice, we recognize the danger of state-sanctioned discrimination, especially against youth whose voices are too often ignored or silenced.

Let us not turn our backs on these students. Let us reaffirm Maine's longstanding commitment to human rights and educational equity. We urge the Committee to vote "Ought Not to Pass" on these bills. Protecting the rights of transgender youth is not a political choice—it is a moral imperative.

Thank you for your time and attention to this urgent matter.