

Claire Horne
Appleton
LD 868

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Appleton, Maine
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Testimony in Opposition of LD 233: An Act to Prohibit Biological Males from Participating in School Athletic Programs and Activities Designated for Females When State Funding Is Provided to the School

Testimony in Opposition of LD 868: An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools

Testimony in Opposition of LD 1002: An Act to Protect Children's Identification by Requiring Public Schools to Use the Name and Gender Specified on a Child's Birth Certificate

Testimony in Opposition of LD 1134: An Act to Prohibit Males from Participating in Female Sports or Using Female Facilities

Testimony in Opposition of LD 1704: An Act to Prohibit a School Administrative Unit from Adopting a Policy That Allows a Student to Use a Restroom Designated for Use by the Opposite Sex

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

My name is Claire Horne and I am a resident of Appleton, Maine. I am writing in opposition of the bills before you today: LD 233; LD 868; LD 1002; LD 1134; and LD 1704.

I went to public school in Maine from Kindergarten through high school. In that time, I participated in many athletic programs. I started playing basketball with my older sister before I was even old enough to be on a team, I eventually joined teams at the YMCA for elementary school aged kids, and then played on a school team throughout my middle school years. I also played soccer and softball in middle school, then soccer, Nordic skiing, and lacrosse in high school. I competed on and against many different teams. My soccer team throughout middle school was co-ed and we played lots of other co-ed teams around the region. I really liked being part of a co-ed team because we were appreciative of each others' skills and specialties rather than judged by our gender or age. In high school I really liked being on a Nordic ski team that trained together, people of all genders. Bigger, supportive teams meant I enjoyed being at practice and I had more capacity to be challenged to perform my personal best. In these experiences on teams with people of all genders, I never felt like I was put at a disadvantage because I was matched against someone of a different gender. I especially never experienced being put at a disadvantage by any trans girls that were playing against me. This harmful myth that athletics are somehow unfair if everyone is allowed to participate harms everyone. Athletics can and should be a space of inclusion.

As a student athlete, I spent a lot of time in bathrooms and locker rooms. My experience was that everyone was respectful of other people's privacy because that's how you wanted to be treated. We are seeing in examples across the country now that bathroom bans and other policies restricting access to facilities based on gender or sex creates increased speculation and policing for everyone. It creates a subjective standard for who "looks like a girl" that is harmful to put people through at any age. My experience as a young person, particularly as a young girl, was feeling unwanted scrutiny on my body from adult administrators and teachers at school who would police what I was allowed to wear at school and make shaming comments if they thought I should be covering up more. I never felt this scrutiny from teammates or peers that I shared a changing room or restroom with. These bills invite increased

scrutiny into how young people's bodies look. Policing the appearance of children and minors is completely inappropriate and creates a culture of fear that disrupts the entire school and athletic experience. Enforcing who can use what facilities based on a birth certificate is dehumanizing to the child that is trying to get a basic human need met. A child or young person being policed by an adult is much more likely to be harmed than to do anyone else any harm. This is how bathroom and athletics bans harm everyone - they force children to have anxiety about how they look and fear of an adult telling them they have to do something against their consent that doesn't align with their identity. Why would we willingly inflict this upon our youth?

Further, it is completely unnecessary to require that children be called by the name on their birth certificate in school. I know many people who go by different names to what is on their birth certificate for lots of different reasons. Some have nicknames they prefer, others go by a middle name or their last name, some want to use a name that they like that feels like it matches them better. It doesn't harm anyone to call someone by the name they want, but it does cause harm to force teachers and administrators to call students names that feel wrong to them. The same goes for misgendering students and forcing them to use restrooms that don't align with who they are. None of these bills respect the autonomy of students.

My experience has been that school athletics can help us to build connections with our peers, move our bodies, and learn new skills. This cannot happen if children and young people are being policed or scrutinized for how they look, what bathroom they use, what their name is, or any other attributes. It is vital that this harmful legislation is opposed so that all children and young people can have inclusive and welcoming experiences at school and athletics without repressive policies.

Thank you for your time and attention. I strongly urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on all aforementioned bills to protect students, athletes, and all young people from harmful scrutiny.

Sincerely,
Claire Horne
Appleton, Maine