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To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Evan and I'm a resident of Portland, Maine. I started to question my gender identity at 13 or 14 years old— and I started to medically transition at the age of 22. I am now 24, about to be 25 in November. I've been on HRT for almost 3 years, and I am nearly 2 years post-op.

Coming to terms with my gender identity was already a struggle in itself. Not only did I have to go through legal hurdles that came with my name change, and go through therapy to start HRT, but I had to cut off several friends, family members, and co-workers due to their lack of support. This was probably harder than going under a surgeon's knife. Transitioning is a very lonely and intense process, and I am very fortunate and grateful that I had, and still have, the resources I do because I live in Maine.

Trans and non-binary people have always existed; we just had to be quieter about it before. Trans people have always gotten medical procedures; they just used to happen in back alleys and basements. This is what is going to happen again if this bill passes.

Was anyone here ever a teenager before? Remember when your parents told you not to go to parties, not to drink or do drugs underage, not to have sex before marriage, not to skip classes? Mine sure did, and that didn't make me stop doing any of that; I just got sneakier and did all of those things in less safe ways. If we tell trans people that our doctors cannot give us safe, medical care that they went through years of schooling to provide us with, trans people are STILL going to get certain medical procedures done. The difference is, sex changes are going to be happening in someone's basement, not in a sterile, safe, and sanitary operating room.

Have any of you ever had a moment where you thought, "man, I feel really stupid. I'm gonna watch some reality TV to feel better about myself," and turned on "Botched?" This is a reality show about surgeons in California who fix poorly done plastic surgeries and injections. There was one episode in which a trans woman named Raji admitted that she had gotten illegal injections into her cheeks and breasts. The woman who had done her injections was a nurse at a plastic surgeon's office, so she had thought she could trust her. As a result, she had several issues with her breasts and granulomas in her cheeks. The new doctors discovered that this illegally operating nurse had injected not silicone, but cement, into her body. She had this work done in the 1980s. That is not very long ago.

If trans healthcare becomes harder to get, people are still going to get it. They are just going to find less safe ways to do so. There are forms on Reddit about how to do "DIY HRT" and I've even heard stories about someone injecting everclear, an 80 proof liquor, into their testicles, in hopes that they would shrink and atrophy. If healthcare becomes illegal, people won't stop getting it; they are just going to migrate into less safe environments with unlicensed practitioners.

I urge you to think of how many people in Maine this bill would harm and please, vote ought not to pass.