

Hannah Murray
Rockland
LD 868

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Hannah Murray, and I am a resident of Rockland. I am here in opposition of the bills before the committee today.

Reading about each bill under consideration, I can't help thinking about my grandfather. I am the oldest of 18 grandchildren, and my grandfather and I had a close relationship, marked by friendly sparring about social and political and cultural issues. Each of our perspectives was marked by the time and place we grew up in, and while we didn't always see eye to eye, we respected each other and always learned a lot from our conversations.

Three aspects of my grandfather's life were core to his identity. First, he loved sports and was a talented athlete. He often said that had he not become a surgeon, he would have liked to have had a career as a baseball player.

Second, he was a man of science. So much so that he performed the world's first organ transplant, and was awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine for it. He later went on to become a plastic surgeon and helped reconstruct the faces of soldiers who had been burned in wars. This was a man who knew a thing or two about biology and the marvels and mysteries of the human body.

Third, he was a man of faith, a devout Catholic throughout his life. He had a very strong moral compass and sense of right and wrong. To be honest, his rigor in this regard could at times be maddening.

I recently learned that, among his many accomplishments, my grandfather performed gender-affirming (gender reassignment) surgeries for patients. This was many years ago, back in the 1960s and 1970s. It never came up in our conversations, as I was a child when he performed them, and transgender issues were not spoken of publicly at that time.

I do not presume to speak for my grandfather, but I always knew his actions to be a direct reflection of his values. Here was a man who simultaneously believed so deeply in God and in science and human biology, performing gender-affirming care more than half a century ago. I doubt very much that he would have done so if he had found it in conflict with his religious and scientific convictions and unflinching sense of what was the right thing to do.

I won't ever have the chance to discuss these bills with him, but I suspect that he would wonder what all the fuss was about. Why shouldn't all individuals have the freedom to be themselves, to be safe and respected at school, and to participate in sports?

These bills would hurt Maine schools and communities and make all girls more vulnerable to bullying and harassment. I urge you to vote Ought Not To Pass on these bills. Thank you.