

Jennifer Blossom
Farmington
LD 380

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

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee. My name is Jennifer Blossom, I am a resident of Farmington, and a clinical child psychologist. I am here today to voice strong opposition to LD380.

As a mental health professional, I have seen the direct impact of anti-trans legislation on children and teens. Clinically, I often work with youth who have attempted, or are seriously considering suicide. I have sat alongside trans teens who attempted suicide because they had been told that their identity was “wrong,” that others were better equipped to dictate who they were or what they were allowed to do with their bodies. Recently, when Maine voted to support trans youth, and reduce barriers to receiving gender affirming care I couldn’t be prouder. I am honored to live and work in a state that supports youth rights. Unfortunately, today those rights are under attack.

Beyond my clinical work, I’m also a scientist. There have been numerous studies that have looked at the impact of youth receiving gender affirming care. The data are clear: Gender affirming care saves lives. Banning access to gender affirming care increases trans youths’ risk of suicide by 74%. Risk of suicide decreases by 40% for trans and gender expansive youth who have just one supportive adult in their lives, such as an affirming healthcare providers. Reducing risk of suicide for trans youth helps prevent suicide for all youth. Youth exposed to suicide, in their schools, or rural communities, have up to a 50% greater risk of attempting suicide themselves. Banning access to gender affirming care will harm all Maine youth.

By protecting access to gender affirming care, you can help protect Maine youth. I strongly urge you to vote “Ought not to pass” on LD380 and the other harmful bills presented this afternoon.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this afternoon.