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LD 380

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

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on LD 380.

I'm writing today as a teacher, a foster parent, and a member of the Religious Society of Friends in opposition to LD 380. As a teacher, I have seen the impact that starting gender-affirming treatment has on several of my students' mental health and school performance. As a foster parent, I know that LGBTQ youth are over-represented among foster youth and youth who seek emancipation, with the result that their support networks are shattered and must be rebuilt and their medical consents are in the hands of well meaning but overworked social workers. As a Quaker, I know that each of us are sacred and equally deserving of love and compassion, and that truth is found both by looking inward and through community discernment. Loving care for children and the most vulnerable around us is how we bring about God's kingdom on earth.

If passed, this legislation would directly harm some of Maine's most vulnerable youth. Transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming youth are disproportionately at risk for thoughts of suicide - a 2024 survey found 46% of transgender and nonbinary youth seriously considered suicide in the last year. Access to gender affirming care significantly reduces suicidality for transgender and non-binary youth.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on these bills. Thank you.