

Representative Katrina Smith  
Palermo  
LD 1704

Good morning Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and members of the Judiciary committee. My name is Katrina Smith and I represent district 62 China Somerville Palermo and Windsor . I am here to present 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 which is of profound importance to the safety, privacy, and dignity of our girls in Maine's schools. As a woman, a mother, a grandmother and an advocate for common-sense policies, I stand before you to express deep concerns about allowing biological boys into girls' bathrooms and to underscore the urgent need to maintain single-sex facilities. You will find I am a cosponsor on virtually every bill presented today and that is because this subject is a priority for me to stand in the gap for our girls. I present this bill because it is not focused on sports, but to ensure we remind me of the greater population, which is every single girl in our schools that uses a bathroom every single day.

Our girls deserve spaces where they feel secure and respected. Bathrooms are private, intimate environments where vulnerability is heightened. Allowing biological boys—whose physical differences cannot be ignored—into these spaces undermines the safety and comfort of our daughters. This is about acknowledging biological realities and protecting the well-being of every girl. Studies, like one from the Williams Institute (2013), show that single-sex facilities reduce instances of discomfort and potential harassment, ensuring a safer environment for all students. When we blur these boundaries, we risk creating situations where girls feel unsafe or silenced, afraid to voice their unease in the name of political correctness.

The concerns are real and grounded in the experiences of parents, students, and educators across Maine. I've heard from mothers who say that their daughters skip using the restroom at school to avoid encounters that make them uncomfortable. These are not abstract fears—they are the lived realities of our children. Who are we to say if this is not traumatizing for girls who are experiencing their first period or who are looking for a safe space to have a cry with their peers on a difficult day. By maintaining single-sex bathrooms, we affirm that our girls' privacy is non-negotiable. This bill ensures that no school administrative unit can adopt policies allowing students to use restrooms designated for the opposite sex, based on gender identity, if it conflicts with their sex assigned at birth. It's a clear, common-sense safeguard.

Moreover, this issue ties directly to fairness and the principles of Title IX, which women fought hard to put into practice and now to uphold. Title IX guarantees girls equal opportunities, including the right to safe, sex-segregated spaces where they can thrive without fear or mental anguish. Eroding these protections risks rolling back decades of progress for girls in education. We cannot allow policies that prioritize one group's preferences over another's fundamental rights. Single-sex bathrooms are not a rejection of compassion—they are a commitment to fairness, ensuring every student's dignity is respected.

I urge the Committee to support this bill but mostly to ensure that bathrooms are 100% included in any of these bills that you choose to pass. This bill is a stand for our girls, a promise to protect their privacy, and a step toward a future where they can learn, grow, and succeed without compromising their safety. Let's listen to the voices of Maine's parents, students, and educators who demand this protection. Together, we can uphold the value of every girl's worth, creating schools where they are empowered to shine. Thank you.