

Bridget Hoke
Portland
LD 380

Hello. My name is Bridget Hoke. I live in the Portland Maine and the date is May 8th, 2025.

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee, Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. I am here to speak in opposition of the bills here today.

I am a queer Mainer, currently in school studying to be a mental health therapist, specializing in working amongst the queer community. As someone who cares deeply for the mental health of my community and our state, I am deeply troubled by the impact these bills would have on my and my friend's mental health. The queer community stands together united and an attack on the human rights of my trans siblings is an attack on me. These bills are a distraction from the real problems that unite us all: affordable housing, healthcare, and human dignity. Taking away the dignity and human rights on trans people does nothing but further afflict an already oppressed group. This is incorrigible and Maine should stand on the right side of history by NOT passing these heinous bills.

As a mental health counseling student, it is well known in the field that gender affirming care for trans youth is a protective factor against suicidality and depression. Transgender and nonbinary youth who feel accepted and supported by their families and peers experience significantly lower rates of suicide attempts. I've worked with trans youth in my time as a teacher in Portland Public schools, and it breaks my heart that these same brave, funny, brilliant youth have to deal with questioning whether their human rights are on the line. Additionally, LD 380 is particularly dangerous for trans youth. I regularly dealt with parents who were not supportive of their kid's transition and having a bigoted parent should not stop youth from getting the health care they deserve.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on these bills. Do the right thing for trans youth and adults in our state.