

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for this opportunity to address the Committee on bills regarding transgender rights, including bills LD 233, 868, 1002, 1134, 1704, 1337, 1432, and 380.

My name is Leah Batt, I am resident of Westbrook and the parent of a 6th grader in Westbrook public schools. I am here today in opposition of the bills before the committee today.

As a parent, these bills would hurt Maine schools and our children, particularly girls, regardless of whether or not they are transgender.

Transgender bans, in sports, shelters and other public spaces are often framed as “protecting women.” However, what they do in reality is invite people to harass, bully and scrutinize any girl or woman who is seen “too tall”, “too strong,” or “too masculine” by accusing them of being trans.

I am above average in height, have short hair and notably, a cleft chin, something statistically less common in women. Depending on what I’m wearing on any given day, I could easily be viewed as “too masculine” – something I was, in fact, regularly called when I was a high school student.

Even for those not directly bullied or accused, it reinforces a very narrow definition of womanhood and acceptable female body types. I would like all girls to be able to explore their interests and personal style and to know that bodies come in a wide range of shapes and sizes without fear of bullying and harassment.

These bans create an environment that is limiting and not protective of girls and women. For that reason, I urge you to vote “Ought not to Pass” on these bills. Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective.

Sincerely,

Leah Batt
Westbrook, Maine

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Westbrook
LD 868

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