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

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Jessica Lavoie, I'm a resident of Lewiston, and I am here to speak as a cis woman and former student athlete. I am here today in opposition of the bills before the committee.

Trans women deserve to be treated equally to cis women. This means having the right to partake in girl's student athletics with their cis peers. We all understand how important athletic participation can be for a child's well-being, mental health, and growth. It's supposed to be an environment to have fun and compete. Sports were the only avenue for me to make friends as a shy kid. We can not deny any child the ability to find and nurture community. I was always uncomfortable changing into my uniform in the locker room out in the open so I would change in the bathroom. There is privacy within a locker room for whoever wants it. Supposed safety concerns heard from the other side are completely baseless. What trans women face day to day is the definition of a safety concern.

Let's be real — these attacks against trans women have little to do with sports themselves. If the majority cared about women in sports you wouldn't find a comment section on social media posts about female sports riddled with statements like "go back in the kitchen" or "make me a sandwich". There is still rampant misogyny in sports. These attacks against trans people are simply fueled by hate — by othering and attacking a marginalized group — a tale as old as time. Trans students are more likely to suffer abuse, bullying and suicidal thoughts as opposed to their cis peers (Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey 2019). It's clear we need to do more to protect trans people. We need to give trans women equal opportunities to participate in girls athletics. It's really that simple.

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!