

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

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Saffron Smythe. I'm present before this committee as a visible member of Maine's transgender community. A community that is under attack. We are vulnerable. So much so that I have questioned many times if I should present myself here at all for fear of my safety. But there are others who are even more vulnerable and need all the representation they can get and they are why I stand before you.

The current law, PL 2023 chapter 413, as it stands has a thorough and structured process to safely provide hormones to those sixteen and older with the valid premise that they can make their own informed consent. That, at 16 years old, the age between a kid and an adult, they can make their own decisions to obtain hormone therapy regardless of their parents inability to understand and support the transgender experience. If a sixteen year old can choose colleges and drive cars, they can make other decisions that require informed consent.

This terrifying and cruel amendment prevents this model of treatment full-stop. This is dangerous. This essential treatment reduces the odds of "[experiencing] severe psychological distress" by 153% according to a 2015 study. Other major sources have similar findings. Yet, the amended bill offers no alternative solution. Why? Because there is none. LD380 is shameful and dangerous. And cruel. And that's the point. Target the most vulnerable: Kids who don't have family support. It's clear the authors have no intention of helping these trans teens. They just want them to stop. Cold-turkey conversion therapy.

My parents would never have let me transition as a young child, not that it was a known possibility. But, if 1990 were today, I would be taking matters into my own hands the second I turned sixteen by trusting myself and my doctor. I can't change the past. What's done is done. But I can offer my suggestion to the committee going forward today: Please vote "Ought not to Pass" on PL380 and on every other bill that was brought forth to the hearings today.

Thank you.

Saffron Smythe
West Gardiner
LD 380

(Originally signed up for in-person testimony, but was unable to stay until the hearing)