



May 8, 2025

Re: Opposition to LD1337, LD 233, and LD868

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Distinguished Members of the Committee on Judiciary:

I write on behalf of the Maine Psychological Association (MePA) in strong opposition to the following bills:

- LD1337: An Act to Amend the Maine Human Rights Act Regarding Female Athletes and Safety in Women's Single-sex Shelters
- LD233: Act to Prohibit Biological Males from Participating in School Athletic Programs and Activities Designated for Females When State Funding Is Provided to the School
- LD868: An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools

MePA is a non-profit association that represents psychologists and psychological examiners in Maine. Our mission is to advance psychology as a science, as a profession, and as a means of promoting human welfare. Our membership consists of practicing psychologists, psychological examiners, academicians, researchers, students, and others who are invested in the science and practice of psychology in Maine.

We oppose these proposed bills because we are focused on evidence-based advocacy that protects the dignity, safety, and psychological well-being of *all* Maine people. Our commitment is grounded in science, ethics, and professional consensus.¹

Psychologists understand that gender is a nonbinary construct that allows for a range of gender identities and that a person's gender identity may not align with sex assigned at birth. While gender refers to the trait characteristics and behaviors culturally associated with one's sex assigned at birth, in some cases, gender may be distinct from the physical markers of biological sex. Specifically, gender identity refers to "a person's deep felt, inherent sense of being a girl, woman, or female; a boy, a man, or male; a blend of male or female; [or another] gender" (see American Psychological Association's Resolution on Gender Identity Change Efforts, 2021).

Our opposition to this legislation is based on the following research findings:

- Exclusionary policies harm the general school atmosphere of tolerance and inclusion

¹ See APA Resolution on Opposing Discriminatory Laws, Policies, and Practices Aimed at LGBTQ+ Persons at <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/resolution-opposing-discriminatory-laws.pdf>



for all students regardless of gender identity.

- Affirming environments, including access to school sports in accordance with gender identity, are strongly associated with reduced rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide risk in transgender youth.
- Participation in sports can be instrumental in establishing feelings of self-confidence and repairing emotional trauma, especially for young people dealing with their gender identity.
- Exclusionary policies provide no general benefit to gender-conforming youth who otherwise differ in athletic ability due to early or late maturation and other factors. All youth should have access to sports.
- In addition, shelters that provide protection to all women are an important resource for vulnerable transgender women who may be at even a greater risk than other women for domestic violence or sexual abuse.

Our position of advocating and supporting all persons is consistent with the guidance of the American Psychological Association, American Psychiatric Association, National Association of Social Workers, American Academy of Pediatrics, and dozens of other leading medical and mental health organizations across the country.

It is for these reasons that we oppose LD1337, LD 233, and LD868 and encourage you to vote ought not to pass on each of these pieces of legislation.

Sincerely,

Jeff Matranga, PhD, ABPP
Psychologist and President, Maine Psychological Association