

Robyn McCutcheon
Burlington, ME¹
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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 Robyn McCutcheon. I'm a resident of Burlington, and I am here as a concerned citizen to speak in opposition to all the bills before you.

I am a retired Foreign Service Officer who served her country largely in the Soviet and post-Soviet world on issues ranging from economic relations to nuclear arms control. Upon retirement in 2019, I held the diplomatic rank of first secretary.

I am also transgender, having transitioned many years ago, my history known only to family, colleagues, intimate friends, and my Irish-American boyfriend. Never was my transgender status a barrier to representing the U.S. in the countries to which I was posted.

That's the good news. The bad news is that I have experienced many of the traumas that other women face. I know what it is to be accosted and groped by a drunken man on a city street. I have experienced the indignity of rape at the hands of, no less, a policeman on a ferry in international waters.²

George Kennan wrote that a diplomatic career requires one to become better and better at representing the interests of one's country . . . a country that one understands less and less. This has become the paradox of my life since transgender issues became a focus in the 2024 elections. I chose Maine for retirement in part because the protections it affords me are superior to those in most other states. I think in particular of the 2014 decision in which Maine's highest court ruled that denying Nicole Maines of Orono the use of the girls' restroom at her school violated her rights under Maine's Human Rights Act.

Today this Committee is reviewing eight bills that would turn back the clock to an earlier age of repression. I strongly oppose all of these bills, many of which fly in the face of the aforementioned 2014 decision. This begins with LD 1432 that would remove gender identity from the Human Rights Act. LD 1337 regarding "safety" in women's single-sex shelters would render Maine less inclusive than majority-Muslim Kazakhstan where the Korgau women's shelter has provided a safe haven for all

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2 The policeman was Georgian, not American.

women for over a decade. Only time limitations prevent me from speaking about the other bills you are considering today.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective. I urge you to vote “Ought not to Pass” on these bills. In the words of the countries to which I was posted, *multumesc, cnacu6o, paxmam, paxmem*. In other words, thank you!