

Nathan Hall
Portland, Maine
May 8, 2025

Testimony
In Opposition To

LD 233: An Act to Prohibit Biological Males from Participating in School Athletic Programs and Activities Designated for Females When State Funding Is Provided to the School

LD 868: An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools

LD 1002: An Act to Protect Children's Identification by Requiring Public Schools to Use the Name and Gender Specified on a Child's Birth Certificate

LD 1134: An Act to Prohibit Males from Participating in Female Sports or Using Female Facilities

LD 1704: An Act to Prohibit a School Administrative Unit from Adopting a Policy That Allows a Student to Use a Restroom Designated for Use by the Opposite Sex

LD 1337: An Act to Amend the Maine Human Rights Act Regarding Female Athletes and Safety in Women's Single-sex Shelters

LD 1432: An Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identity from the Maine Human Rights Act

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee.
Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Nathan Hall, I'm a resident of Portland. I'm here today in opposition of the anti-transgender bills before the committee.

I've been a 6th grade teacher in Maine for my entire career, 16 years. In that time, I've taught close to a thousand students. 6th graders have taught me how important it is to be accepted for who you are. When a 6th grader doesn't feel accepted they aren't in a mental space to be able to learn to their full potential. This applies to kids who don't speak English, live in a shelter, or are transgender or non-binary.

I've had numerous transgender and non-binary students in my classroom, but I'd like to share about one in particular. This student was in my class about 7 or 8 years ago. He would spend his mornings before school in my room to avoid the teacher who would release students to class by saying, "Alright boys and girls." He had to tell his peers multiple times that he was a boy

because they misgendered him, most of the time on purpose. He had to deal with another teacher asking him why he can't just be normal. And he was taught by teachers who, while they were quiet in their disdain, would vocalize behind closed doors their displeasure with him by saying "Why can't people just be who they're supposed to be?" Implying they wanted others to be something they could be comfortable with, instead of changing their own views to accept the students in front of them.

This student didn't feel accepted at school and his mental health suffered greatly because of it.

Since then most of my colleagues have changed how they see and understand transgender and nonbinary youth. Instead of being frustrated by them, they are supportive and caring. Offering their classrooms as an oasis in a time when so many people in political office talk about erasing them.

The problem which you should be focusing on is ensuring that all students are accepted at school. Not trying to harm some of the most vulnerable students.

Every two years my students complete the Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey. In 2023 3% of middle school students reported to be transgender. Of that 3%, 73% reported having been bullied on school property. That is the highest percentage of all of the categories. 79% of those transgender students reported feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row. Again the highest percentage of all of the categories. 72.9% said in the past 30 days their mental health was not good most of the time or always. Again the highest percentage. 67.5% of those students reported thinking about killing themselves. Again the highest. 62.2% reported they had made a plan to kill themselves. Again the highest. Finally, 38.6% reported having tried to kill themselves. Again the highest.

I urge you to vote "Ought Not to Pass" on this bill and all of the other bills which limit the rights and protections of some of Maine's most vulnerable youth.

The following is additional testimony that I was going to share instead of my written testimony above.

Already students are saying, "President Trump says that there is only male and female, that is the law" or "You don't actually exist."

Just a few years ago I had a student who didn't want their parent to know that they were out at school. Teachers, staff, and students called the student by their preferred name and used their preferred pronouns, but in emails and phone calls home we always made sure to use their at home name. If it wasn't for Maine's inclusive laws some teachers wouldn't have felt comfortable or supported in doing this. Forcing education staff to continually deadname students would have a huge impact on their relationships with staff and make it so much harder for those students to access their education.

Regarding bathrooms, I've worked in two schools now which had single toilet staff bathrooms become gender neutral bathrooms. It hasn't been a problem at all. Not even a little bit. There are so few out transgender and non-binary students that there is never a problem. Further, they are sooooo much more clean and tidy than the boys who use the boys bathroom.