

Ray Spencer
North Yarmouth, 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 Ray Spencer, I'm a resident of North Yarmouth.

I am here in opposition of the bills before the committee today.

As the father of a trans non-binary person who graduated from the Greely Public School district six years ago, I know that these bills, if passed, would harm a particularly vulnerable population of students.

The Trevor Project recently published the results of its 2024 Survey on the Mental Health of LGBTQ+ young people in Maine.

For those not familiar, The Trevor Project is a nonprofit organization that provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention services for LGBTQ+ young people.

Here are some survey results for Maine:

Suicide Risk

- 42% of Maine transgender and non-binary young people seriously considered suicide in the past year
- 18% of them attempted suicide in the past year

Anxiety and Depression

- 72% of Maine transgender and non-binary young people experienced symptoms of anxiety
- 55% them experienced symptoms of depression

These young people of Maine are not inherently prone to higher suicide risk because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. They are placed at higher risk because of how they are mistreated and stigmatized in society.

The bills before the committee further stigmatize this already vulnerable population by:

- Prohibiting trans students from participating in school sports (LD 233)

- Prohibiting trans students from using the bathrooms and locker rooms that align with their gender identity (LD 1134 and LD 1704)
- Increase the hurdles for a trans youth to be addressed by their chosen name in school (LD 1002) or receive gender-affirming care (LD 380)

Any of these bills, if passed, will increase the negative mental health outcomes of Maine's trans students.

If these bills do not pass, Maine's young trans student, similar to my kid, will feel seen and supported.

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.