

NOTE: I was at the state house on May 8th to testify, but the sessions went overtime so long that I went home. It appeared I would not get an opportunity to testify until 9pm or so.

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Testifying in opposition to LD 1432
Specifically this sentence:

The opportunity for an individual to secure employment without discrimination because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation ~~or gender identity~~, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry, national origin, or familial status is recognized as and declared to be a civil right.

Good afternoon. I'm Chris Newcomb, from Gorham, ME. I taught in Maine public schools for 30 years.

Each of the legislative documents that are being considered here today was born in fear of something different from culturally established norms. That's all. Fear of something that differs from the way the writers of these documents want to see the world. They cannot come to grips with the reality that the world is not binary by nature. It is not black or white. It is not this or that. It is this, and that, and these, and those, and so many others. A brief look at the world around us demonstrates its amazing variety... so many different species of flowers, trees, and animals. Every snowflake is unique. Every stone on the beach is different. Why would we want to create a world where there is only one or the other when the world around us proclaims its beauty through diversity?

This specific document, LD 1432, clearly demonstrates the harsh and cruel intentions of each of these documents. The intent to remove gender identity from this list clearly demonstrates the need for it to be included.

You're intelligent enough to know that this legislation should simply read as:

"The opportunity for an individual to secure employment without discrimination is recognized as and declared to be a civil right."

That's all we need. Right? Don't discriminate in employment practices.

But employers discriminated in employment practices so much that we had to add race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and all the rest. Because, regardless of a person's demonstrated skills or abilities, employers weren't hiring them. So, the state stepped in to protect the people of Maine.

But this legislation presented to your committee says: no, we need to take gender identity off this list, even though it was put there because enough people in Maine were being discriminated against because of their gender identity.

This. This act of erasing gender identity from this list is exactly why gender identity was added to the list in the first place. It is discrimination in the most basic terms.

And what's more, how does gender identity affect employment? So what if a person wishes to go by they/them? So what if a person who appears to you as a male goes by she/her? What does that have to do with their job? You know the answer to that: Absolutely nothing!

LD1432, like the other documents presented today, is primarily born from the fear of something different from culturally established norms. They have been nourished in suspicion and lies, and are presented here with harsh and cruel intentions.

Thank you.

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