



## TESTIMONY OF MAINE PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

### 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 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**

Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary  
State House, Room 438  
Thursday, May 8, 2025

Good morning, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Rebecca Boulos. I am a resident of South Portland and executive director of Maine Public Health Association.

MPHA is the state's oldest, largest, and most diverse association for public health professionals. We represent more than 850 individual members and nearly 70 organizations across the state. MPHA works to optimize the health of people and places in Maine through advocacy, education, partnerships, and public health workforce development. In our work, we place an emphasis on improving the policies, systems and environments that underlie health inequities because only by doing that can we improve health outcomes for *all* people.

MPHA opposes 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 1134, "An Act to Prohibit Males from Participating in Female Sports or Using Female Facilities," and 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."

We oppose these bills for several reasons, namely they are in direct violation of the [Maine Human Rights Act](#), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of protected class, including in education, and expressly defines protected class to include sex and sexual orientation, including gender identity and expression. These bills also place an undue burden on young people, increasing their likelihood of worsened mental and physical health outcomes. In order to best promote the health of all students, we need to ensure our policies are not transphobic.

Results from the [2023 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey](#) show that transgender students are more likely to have poor mental and physical health outcomes compared with their cisgender peers, including depressive symptoms and suicidal ideation, bullying, substance use, and physical, emotional and sexual violence.

Research has consistently demonstrated that physical activity has positive benefits for physical and mental health, including protecting against cardiovascular disease and diabetes, encouraging bone health and healthy

weight, improving cognitive function, and reducing depression and anxiety.<sup>1</sup> These bills will also take away the protective factors of supportive communities and the camaraderie facilitated by participating in sports, and further subject transgender youth to stigma, mistrust and maltreatment by calling them out, and denying them the opportunity to play.

We firmly believe that all people should have fair and just opportunities to reach their full health potential. Research has consistently shown that factors outside of our control drive the opportunities that are available to us and thus impact our health status and outcomes.<sup>2</sup> We believe these bills contribute to those outside barriers to good health, and as such, we strongly oppose them. We respectfully request you to vote LD 233, LD 868, LD 1134, and LD 1704 “Ought Not to Pass.” Thank you for your consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Physical activity basics: Benefits of physical activity](#). April 24, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization. [Social determinants of health](#). 2025.