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LD 2239

I am a trans woman writing in opposition of LD 2239 "An Act to Designate School Sports Participation and Facilities by Sex"

Just like the batch of anti-trans bills that were defeated in 2025, this is another attempt to see what sticks. Supporting this measure are the usual suspects: Religious groups clutching their sacred texts, conservatives eager to have a minority to 'other', and the ill-informed being swayed by the other two groups.

Trans people are born trans. It isn't something that gets detected at birth, so we come out to the world sometime after our births. We should be celebrating the fact that today's children have the opportunity to be accepted for who they are. We should be celebrating the bravery that trans children show by expressing who they are to the world. In the 1990's and 2000's when I was in school, the best we could do is bottle it up and endure. That is not the life I want for any trans kid today or in the future.

Instead of celebrating the opportunities and bravery of the new generation, the very same people that forced me into the closet are protesting the fact that we can exist publicly now.

This was never about sports. This was never about fairness. This is about attacking a minority in small, seemingly meaningless ways as a gateway to larger and larger attacks. If a sports ban for trans people goes into effect in Maine, we have then been proven to be a second class of citizen, and will lose more and more rights.

On the actual 'merits' of LD 2239, a few points

- Not all schools have co-ed teams, I'd wager a lot of them do not have co-ed teams in fact. Likely only larger schools have such an option. Simply saying "Oh well they can play co-ed" is not always an option.

- Sports is about teamwork and working with your peers, about belonging. Bills like this in effect say that we do not belong. That we do not matter.

- In the summary of the bill, it states "A female student may participate on a team designated for males if no team designated for females is available in that sport". So a male by this bill's definition, couldn't be on a girls team if there wasn't a boys team. There is a double standard for sure. If this and similar bills were about 'protecting girls in sports', then having one girl on a team of boys would violate this original premise. Yet according to similar bills, having one trans girl on a girls team would increase the danger so much that we have to ban it? I highly doubt that.

- Forcing trans kids into private spaces in opposition to their gender expression is another way to 'other' us. To force us into positions of discomfort. To choose between conformity, or bullying. I was not out of the closet until adulthood. I hated being in the boys locker room. I chose to conform as best I could, and suffer through it. I never want that for any other trans kid. Having access to spaces belonging to your gender is not only affirming for trans children, it is generally safer too. If you really want to protect kids, this is a way to do it.

- This bill more or less has a poor understanding of biology. A child may be born intersex. A child may have XY chromosomes but grow up female due to immunity to certain hormones. There is far more out there than the simplistic gender binary we fool ourselves into believing.

- The bill also provides for a student to sue if they are "deprived of an athletic opportunity or suffers a direct injury" related to a trans individual. So basically if a trans person competes and gets into a 5th place tie with a cis-gender competitor, the trans person can be taken to court. The Riley Gaines defense. Additionally, many sports are rough on the body and injuries during play are not uncommon. I've seen my share of bloodied knees, feet, and hands just from basketball. Introduce a single trans person to the team, and suddenly one slip up can lead to a lawsuit?

- Despite the assertion "The initiated bill provides that separation of athletic teams

and private spaces by sex under the initiated bill does not constitute unlawful discrimination", the entire bill is about introducing discrimination against trans people. It may somehow be legally valid under the Maine Human Rights Act, but that just means the Maine Human Rights Act missed a few key points and should be amended accordingly, in the minorities favor.

I urge you to vote "Ought Not to Pass" on LD 2239.