

April 1, 2023

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and distinguished members of the committee,

My name is Ali Bell and I am a student from Houlton who has been impacted by the current law.

At thirteen, I should not have to be here today. But I came to fight for my rights and get back what has been taken away from me.

Have you ever felt alone?

Do you know what it feels like to wake up every morning and learn in isolation when you've gone to school your entire life?

Do you know how hard it is to sit on the sidelines and cheer on your teammates that you've always played with?

Do you know how hard it is to see pictures of your friends dressed up, going to dances and not be able to go?

Do you know what it feels like to be discriminated against because you don't have an IEP?

Imagine watching your classmates that you've gone to school with for your entire life put on their caps and gowns and have a graduation without you?

Do you know what it feels like to be forced to leave your family to go to college in another state?

Do you know what it feels like to doubt your government because you don't feel protected?

God has a plan for my life to give me a hope and a future. He has put you in a position today to make a decision that will direct the rest of my life.

By supporting LD 51:

I will be able to go back to school with my friends,  
I will be able to develop relationships by being with people every day,  
I will be able to participate in sports and other extracurricular activities,  
I will be able to apply to college in Maine and consider raising my family here,  
I will know there are people who will stand up for what is right,  
And, I will thank God for using you to answer my prayers.

Please support LD 51.

Thank you,  
Ali Bell