



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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*Testimony of Rep. Rebecca Jauch in support of*  
**LD 1412, Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine**  
**Establishing That All Maine Residents Have Equal Rights Under the Law**  
*before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary*

Good morning, Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Rebecca Jauch and I represent House District 51 which is the majority of Topsham. I am pleased to be here today to support **LD 1412, Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine Establishing That All Maine Residents Have Equal Rights Under the Law.**

When I have brought up the Equal Rights Amendment with friends or family, I have sometimes been asked why it's needed or I have sometimes been told that everyone already has equal rights and that the ERA is unnecessary. I am here today to push back against that perspective. I am here today because this bill is, in fact, necessary, and until LD 1412 is passed we will never truly have equal rights under the law.

Passing LD 1412 will explicitly guarantee that the rights afforded individuals under the Constitution of Maine apply to all individuals, regardless of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, physical or mental disability, ancestry or national origin of an individual. We need to enshrine these rights in our Constitution so that there is no question as to where we stand in supporting our people. I have two small children and I want to know that when they grow up, no matter what categories they may belong to or identify with, they will be protected equally under our laws just like everyone else. To be clear, there are still incidences of discrimination occurring in our state as a result of perceived differences, whether we are willing to acknowledge them or not. LD 1412 will ensure that Maine has a judicial standard for determining cases of discrimination and as a result will move our State forward, making it a more welcoming and inclusive place to live and work.

Thank you for your consideration today and I ask you to please join me in supporting LD 1412.