

Testimony in support of:

LD 537: An Act to Prohibit the Doxing of a Minor and to Authorize a Related Civil Action

Submitted By:

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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and members of the Judiciary Committee

My name is Avery Alsop. I'm from Old Town, and as of this year I'm a student at the University of Maine. I'm grateful for the opportunity to be here today. I'm here to speak in support of LD 537.

I wanted to pursue a career as a diplomat following my education, but I fear that may no longer be possible for me. At this rate, I can't be sure of *any* career because my community has found itself under a relentless assault by one of the most hateful and vitriolic movements in America.

Speaking for those of my community, I think it's fair to say that we've all learned, through sheer exposure, to cope with the hatred. The never-ending calls to criminalize us, disenfranchise us, imprison us, or even just murder us outright are a daily burden for us. We're used to being slandered as sexual deviants, monsters, groomers, mutilators, and endless other lies. Our skins have become quite thick. Unfortunately, these words have increasingly been turning into action, such as here, in this very building, where representatives of the people of Maine are using this rhetoric to goad hate mobs into attacking children.

The law hasn't caught up with the times. Instantaneous communication enables new forms of harassment at an intensity that past decades rarely saw. Doxxing, by definition, encourages violence and harassment. It only takes one post, one message, to sic the worst people on victims. In one method, false reports are made to law enforcement with the intent of causing the victim to die at the hands of police. Consider how disgraceful it is that this is being done to *children*. We may have recent incidents in mind, but this has been happening for a long time. As it stands, no family is safe from it.

Elected officials are disgracefully using this to terrify their opposition and bolster their political campaigns. I'm transgender, and I'm also an athlete. If anyone wants to discredit our bodies, spread misinformation about what we are, and frame us to push regressive ideologies, I

will happily be there to oppose you- but leave children out of this. This underhanded strategy of harassing the innocent is unacceptable.

This bill will provide long overdue protections for the specific victims of recent days, but it will also protect all children in Maine from any similar harm. This bill is not just for transgender minors. I urge you to support LD 537 and end this despicable harassment of children for political gain.