

Rabbi Lorin James Troderman
Camden, Maine
May 8, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Lorin Troderman. I am a resident of Camden and the rabbi at Adas Yoshuron Synagogue in Rockland. I speak for myself and not on behalf of my congregation. I received ordination through ALEPH, the Alliance for Jewish Renewal, one of over 100 Jewish organizations¹ who are in alignment with my opposition to the bills before the committee today.

I recently completed my rabbinical ordination and had the privilege of attending two seminaries that ordained trans rabbis and with whom I had the honor of studying our sacred texts. In addition to those colleagues relating their challenges of childhood discrimination, I am also witness to my trans nephew and their family navigating high school life. These experiences demonstrate to me the distressing circumstances trans youth face. They and their families are not to be shamed; they should be lifted up with love, decency and respect. Why would we want to cause pain, heartache and worse? Simply put, our faiths call us to higher purposes.

In the Jewish tradition the primacy of human dignity is related through the biblical understanding in the book of Genesis that we are all created in the image of God,

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(<https://rac.org/press-room/100-us-jewish-organizations-send-letter-congress-opposing-anti-transgender-sports-ban>)

b'tzelem elohim in biblical Hebrew. This moral teaching resonates with me as one of the most pressing and urgent issues of our time. Attacks on the dignity of members of our community, as these bills are, elevate such discrimination to an unprecedented level, deface all created by God, and call me to testify today.

With a deep sense of humility, I appreciate the challenges at hand for this committee. Balancing rights and responsibilities with moral sensibilities for the youth of this state is a mighty task. My greatest concern is that the passing of these discriminatory proposals will not only harshly impact our trans youth, but drastically encourage further discrimination against trans members of our community. These are times that cry out for leadership and unity, not the fostering of further fear and divisiveness.

The Hebrew Bible is built on an understanding that we must protect the orphan, the widow, the poor and the stranger – the most vulnerable and disparaged in our midst. Three millennia or so later, each of these reminds us that the minorities in our community are equally deserving of the dignity and respect afforded all peoples. Trans folks can not be legislated away. They are here as are we all, by the grace of God, and deserve equal protection of the law with the inalienable right to participate in all aspects of life in their gender-affirmed identity.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought Not to Pass" on these bills. Thank you.