

Jennifer Curran  
Falmouth, Maine  
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LD 868

Good morning , Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and distinguished members of the Maine Judiciary Committee. Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to address this Committee at this time.

My name is Jennifer Curran and live in Falmouth, Maine. I am a Mainer, a mother and a Social Worker.

I am here to support transgender children here in Maine and thus, I am here to testify against LD 868.

Studies show that transgender children are much more at risk - more likely to be the victims of discrimination and harassment when forced to use the bathrooms that do not align with their gender identity. Research also consistently shows that policies restricting bathroom access for transgender individuals are associated with increased rates of sexual assaults and other negative outcomes for transgender youth.

For example - the UCLA William's Institute conducted studies in Massachusetts & nationally that reviewed empirical evidence on safety & privacy in restrooms as a result of the enactment of non-discrimination laws that protect transgender people's ability to use restrooms according to their gender identity.

The study took data from criminal incident reports on safety & privacy violations related to assaults, sex crimes and voyeurism in public restrooms, locker rooms and dressing rooms.

Locations in Massachusetts with non-discrimination laws that protect transgender people were matched with locations without these protections. These matched pairs were compared over a period of time. The following were the findings:

1. The incident of safety & privacy violations in these spaces were rare
2. There was no significant change in privacy & safety violations across matched locations after non-discrimination laws were enacted.
3. There was no evidence that privacy & safety in restrooms changed as a result of transgender people having, by law, access to restrooms & other facilities in accordance with their gender identity.

To further add depth, this institute then completed a study of states & counties across the U.S., building on the Massachusetts study,

This larger study was to estimate the impact of gender identity non-discrimination laws for public accommodations on the prevalence of violent discrimination perpetrated by strangers.

Violent victimization perpetrated by strangers is the type of crime that is purported to increase when transgender people may use restrooms & other gendered facilities. The following were the findings:

1. Comparing states and counties with & without non-discrimination laws - implementing non-discrimination laws did not increase victimization rates.
2. There was no evidence that violent crime by strangers increased as a result of transgender people having, by law, access to restrooms that accord with their gender identity.

I am asking that you please vote against this bill. There is no evidence that supports the need for this legislation.