

Alex Roan, LCPC, Ph.D.
Westbrook, Maine
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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to address you. My name is Alex Roan. I'm a resident of Westbrook and I work at Saco Middle School. I am here to testify in opposition to the bills being discussed (LD 223, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, and LD 1704).

As a school social work clinician, my job is to work with students to help them solve problems, and to work with school staff and administrators to solve problems we are facing as a school. There are indeed many problems that our students and schools are grappling with, but the fact trans students use bathrooms or that a few transgender girls play sports are not real problems that we spend time on. We have several transgender students in our school and it is just not a big deal. It seems that there is a perception among some that transgender female athletes are burly supermen who decide to pretend to be girls so that they can earn medals playing on girls' teams. This is simply not reality. Like anyone else, transgender athletes vary enormously in their talents, abilities, and physical characteristics. Transgender girls playing sports are children who are trying to fit in, have fun, and pursue the same extracurricular opportunities available to all other students.

Transgender students in Maine are subjected to high levels of bullying and harassment. In the 2023 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey, 73% of transgender middle school students reported that they were bullied at school and 67.5% reported that they have considered killing themselves. This is a group of students that we need to do more to protect and *include*, not exclude from school activities. When I think of the transgender kids that I know and work with, I picture the kind, genuine, silly individuals that I know them to be. They just want to be accepted and treated fairly.

The handful of transgender girls in Maine playing sports are not harming anyone, but these bills would potentially harm all girls playing sports. At a time in life when concerns about fitting in and body image abound, the threat of being accused of being transgender by an opposing coach and subjected to humiliating "gender checks" would absolutely prevent some students from participating in sports, especially girls who worry that they are not "feminine-looking enough." These proposed changes to Maine law help no one, and would only create another opportunity for scrutinizing girls' bodies and violating girls' privacy.

I urge you to protect our vulnerable transgender students and all female athletes by voting "Ought not to pass" on these bills. Thank you for this opportunity to share my perspective.