

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for letting me address the committee.

I am Lyn Grotke, a voter from Unity. By a roll of the genetic dice I am a cisgender, heterosexual woman. I use she/her pronouns.

I'm here to testify in opposition to eight bills I consider frankly malicious and a great waste of time and energy in a time when our climate is in crisis, or democracy is at risk, and many Maine people do without basic needs being met. LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, LD 1704, LD 1337, LD 1432, and LD 380 ought not to pass!

I am unconcerned if trans people use a bathroom they align with or participate in sports with my grandchildren or read stories in libraries or other things. **Rights are not rights unless they are universal for all humans**, otherwise they are privileges. All people deserve agency to express their full truth so long as they do no harm, including our transgender neighbors. **Fascism rises by chiseling away rights**, beginning with marginalized groups. Diminishing rights in this time of rising fascism is irresponsible and poses a threat to all.

Many want to deny trans peoples' rights based on religious values. We have religious freedom and there are a wide variety of beliefs. Even so, none of that is relevant because we have separation of church and state guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution.

Many homophobic people argue there is a strict gender binary that is genetic. This is a gross oversimplification. I read many articles describing a wide spectrum of genetic variation which determines the gender and sexual expression of humans. Where a person falls on that spectrum is not a matter of choice but biology according to scientific consensus.

Likewise, trans people pose no credible threat to the public or individuals. To the contrary, they are statistically less likely to be a perpetrator and much more likely to be the victim of a violent crime. They are less likely to get justice when they are a crime victim. My own cousin was murdered in an unsolved homophobic hate crime. Any normalization of the exclusion and segregation of trans neighbors endangers their persons and their lives.

Trans people are traumatized by marginalization and violent hate crimes. They sometimes internalize homophobic or transphobic hate leading to self harm and suicide. Further isolating and excluding them increases their feeling of sorrow, loneliness or hopelessness and is needlessly cruel.

Trans people suffer workplace discrimination and consequent economic hardships. This is difficult for them and a waste of talent for the community. We should all oppose any bills that make them even more vulnerable to discrimination. Barring them from shelters adds injury to economic hardships.

Trans people deserve the exact same rights and any other human being. Please don't waste any more precious time in the state legislature with transphobic bills that will exacerbate rather than solve problems. Fascism rises when vulnerable small population segments lose rights, are demonized and marginalized one group at a time. This is a danger to the rights of all.

Vote ought not to pass on all eight of these discriminatory bills which will harm more than help make Maine "the way life should be."

Thank you for your time,

Lyn Grotke