

Elizabeth B. Rodman (Betsy)  
Wiscasset, ME  
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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Betsy Rodman, and I live in Wiscasset. **I'm here to express my strong opposition to the anti-trans bills before you.**

I'm a lifelong educator and proud mom of two extraordinary sons—Glen and Phoenix. Glen, who is transgender, has grown into himself with a strength and joy that inspire me daily. Watching him thrive—more at home in his body, more confident in who he is—has been one of the greatest gifts of my life. **His happiness harms no one.** But these bills threaten to take away the safety and dignity he—and so many others—deserve.

As an educator, I've spent decades working with young people who are pushed to the margins—especially LGBTQ+ youth. Some have supportive families. Many do not. Time and again, I've found myself in the role of "honorary mom"—not because I could ever replace someone's parent, but because so many young people are simply longing to be seen, to be heard, and to be loved for who they are.

I can't count the number of times students have taken refuge in my office to avoid unsafe hallways, locker rooms, or bathrooms. Some have told me they hold their pee all day, too afraid to risk *either* restroom. That's not just unfair—it's dangerous. And it's cruel. These bills would only make that worse by sending a message that trans students are less worthy of safety and respect. They legitimize bullying, give license to discrimination, and embolden those who would question these young people's bodies, identities, and right to belong.

Let me be clear: **it is not trans people who are the threat. It is trans people who are under threat.** We are talking about human beings—students, neighbors, children. My son. Why is "trans" the first label some want to apply to him? Why not kind? Funny? Brilliant? Joyful? Why not...*human*?

Elizabeth Peratrovich, Tlingit Alaskan Native and civil rights activist once said, *"Asking you to give me equal rights implies that they are yours to give. Instead, I must demand that you stop trying to deny me the rights all people deserve."* These bills deny trans people their rights, their dignity, and sometimes—even their will to live. We know that gender-affirming care saves lives.

These young people—my son Glen, my students, so many others—are not the problem. Like all young people, they are a gift. **Glen is not a danger to anyone, nor should he be in danger simply for existing.** If you've judged trans youth without getting to know any, you are missing out on some of the most courageous, kind, and creative people you'll ever meet.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective today, and thank you for your service to our communities and our state. Please vote Ought Not to Pass on these bills. **Reject fear, division, and cruelty. Choose dignity, safety, and love instead. Let's build a Maine where everyone belongs.**