

Testimony Opposing LD 1337 & LD 1432

Public Hearing: 1pm May 8, 2025 – Judiciary Committee

Submitted by: Benn Marine, Cumberland, ME

Members of the Judiciary Committee:

Good afternoon. As I mentioned earlier today, I'm testifying at three different points throughout this hearing—each time from a different perspective. This afternoon, I speak to you as a business leader and entrepreneur who has helped build a mission-driven company right here in Maine.

I co-lead a media strategy firm with my brother. While we're proudly based here in Maine, our team is fully remote—not by choice, but because it's been difficult to find the talent we need locally. That's slowly changing. We're seeing more people consider Maine as a place to live and work, drawn in by our quality of life and our reputation as a welcoming state.

LD 1337 and LD 1432 threaten that reputation.

These bills would strip gender identity protections from the Maine Human Rights Act—rolling back civil rights for transgender people, and signaling to the rest of the country that Maine is not a safe or inclusive place for everyone.

That's not just morally wrong—it's bad for business.

When I talk to other business owners in Maine, they're not asking for laws that divide or discriminate. They're asking for tools to attract and retain talent. They're asking how to build diverse teams that reflect our communities. And they're working hard to create workplaces where people feel valued and seen so they can retain their talent.

These bills make that harder. They create legal uncertainty. They create reputational risk. And they make it harder to recruit professionals who expect the places they live to uphold the dignity and safety of all people—including LGBTQ+ people.

Beyond business, I'm also someone who gives back. I serve on nonprofit boards. I volunteer over 100 hours a year of my time to our communities here in Maine. I'm deeply invested in the health and well-being of this state. I've built a life here—one rooted in hope, in purpose, and in Maine's values.

These bills break that promise. They tell people like me—and the youth coming up behind me—that we don't count. That we can be denied access to housing, services, even basic protections under the law, just because of who we are.

That's not the Maine I know. That's not the Maine I love.

Please vote no on LD 1337 and LD 1432. Keep Maine a place where everyone belongs—and where every worker, every family, and every future feels welcome.

Thank you.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benn Marine", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Benn Marine