

Lyn Bell

Norway, Maine

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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee.

My name is Lyn Bell; I'm a resident of Norway. I am a retired deputy sheriff, and an elected official in Oxford County.

I am here in opposition of the bills before the committee today.

To the authors and supporters of these bills, I would like you to consider how we remember those who opposed desegregation and the Civil Rights Act. Names like George Wallace and Strom Thurmond live on in infamy as memorials to bigotry and national shame. If you are supporting anti-trans legislation, history will remember you the same.

I grew up in the Deep South, and my first grade class in Baldwin County Alabama was among the last in the nation to desegregate twenty years after Brown vs Board of Education. Those political leaders that opposed equality spent millions of taxpayer dollars and thousands of man hours trying to substantiate their prejudice and discrimination through trash legislation just like this. The leadership of my birth state was culpable in the disenfranchisement and death of countless people of color. If you enact these bills, you will be doing the same to our transgender citizens, and it will shine a light to the world that we are just as ignorant as the bigots who said one group of people were better than another because of the color of their skin.

Being transgender is as natural and as common as having red hair. Every major medical group including the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Psychiatric Association support gender affirming care. Your transgender constituents deserve to be accepted for who they are. They deserve to have their healthcare needs met, and the rest of us deserve leaders who don't pander to intolerance, and ignorance.

If this passes, if we allow ourselves to "other" this minority group, then who's next?

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on these bills. Thank you.