



May 7, 2025

Chairpersons Carney and Kuhn, Senators Haggan and Talbot Ross, and Representatives Babin, Caruso, Dana, Henderson, Lee, O'Halloran, Poirier, Pugh, Sato, and Sinclair:

My name is Rev. Christine Dyke, and I am the Lead Minister of First Parish Congregational Church, UCC, in Gorham. I am speaking in opposition of LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, and LD 1704. These bills, under the guise of "protecting" girls, misunderstand the risk that is present in the lives of students who are transgender and non-binary. These bills also misunderstand the concept of gender.

As a person who lives and leads in the Christian tradition, we are constantly reminded in our stories that people do not enter this life fully formed. The Christian tradition has many stories of people changing their names and their ideas of who they are to become. We are engaged in the ongoing process of life, and just when we think we know who we are, or even more audacious and abusive, when we decide who another person is, we are confronted in our prejudice and rigidity. "Biological sex" is one of those instances, and as people of faith we do not consider it a litmus test that determines our humanity or our right to be treated equally, and is not limited to two sexes.

My daughter's best friend from high school is a transgender woman. I watched her find the truth of who she is. Her friends and at times, the school, was a safe space, her only safe space. I was never concerned for my daughter's safety, but I was concerned for hers. Other girls targeted her using hateful words and discriminatory behavior. There was a conversation about forcing her to use the boys' bathroom, and I was afraid that she would be physically harmed. She was assigned the teachers' bathroom, which set her apart from the other students, alienating her. Keeping her from participating in any school activity because of our unwillingness to face our prejudices, would have been unequal treatment, and forced her to take on an identity that was not who she was and is today.

Research shows that there is no evidence of safety risks to cisgendered people when trans people use restroom aligning with their authentic gender. (GLAAD). In fact, it is trans people who are at risk for harassment and violence. (GLAAD)

**LD 233** Sports in High School, and I would say at any age, are not about just winning. Students who participate in sports, as all people, need the experience of working with and valuing a wide variety of people. They must also learn the emotional skill of reacting in healthy way to both achievement and disappointment. There are many ways that the “playing field” in school sports is not equal, such as age, maturity, parental resources, to name a few, and targeting transgender students is deeply disrespectful and blind to the true reality.

**LD 868** misstates the source of equity for students and misstates who is at danger in changing rooms and housing. Exclusion does not begin to solve the issue of the danger that exists for transgender students who are seeking to participate in the fullness of their school experience. Cisgender students, as shown in research, are not in danger.

**LD 1002** not only misunderstands both sex and gender but also prevents children from expressing who they are. Misgendering a person leads to psychological and spiritual wounds and can lead to suicidal ideation and suicide. Schools are there to assist children in growing and developing, not inflict unnecessary pain.

**LD 1134** Please see **LD233** and **LD868**.

**LD1704** Please see **LD868**

The targeting of trans people through legislation and at schools is not only inhumane, but it is contrary to the traditions of people of faith. Instead of excluding, we need to focus on what we can learn when we encounter people who ask us to expand what we know and who we are.

Thank you,

Rev. Christine Dyke  
Lead Minister