

TESTIMONY OF CATE MARVIN,
BOARD MEMBER, PFLAG PORTLAND MAINE CHAPTER
IN OPPOSITION TO LD 233, 868, 1002, 1134, and 1704
Judiciary Committee, Room 438, May 8, 2025 9:30 a.m.

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

My name is Cate Marvin and my pronouns are "she/hers." My transgender child and I moved here from New York in 2016 and feel lucky to consider Maine our home. We find peace here. My child, whose pronouns are "they/them," is now finishing tenth grade at Scarborough High School.

As you know, raising children is not for the faint of heart. Sometimes I resent how my kid's transness makes our lives so difficult and takes up so much time. But then I realize that it's not my child's transness that's posing the problem. Not at all. It's people who make being trans a problem, or who make this minor issue their focus to create distraction from much larger issues, such as social security being dismantled. Who are they to tell other people how to live? It doesn't strike me as true to the values of the Mainers I know. Folks here live and let live.

My kid is a straight "A" student, award-winning artist and watercolorist (they even had a piece chosen a few years back to represent their high school at the Portland MFA); this 16 year old is extremely passionate about animals, especially cats and reptiles, and can crochet like nobody's business. But they have no interest in sports.

So why am I here today? I ask for a moment of your time to consider the bathroom business embedded within the variety of proposals you are hearing today.

You might think it's not a big deal, this bathroom stuff. And, truthfully, it shouldn't be.

My kid came out as trans nonbinary at the age of 11. The bathroom situation for nonbinary folks is especially tricky. My kid is not comfortable with going into either the men's or women's room. The men's room scares them because there are men in there and because the men's room tends to be "gross," as my child observed. However, they are also afraid to go into the women's room. They present as masculine and worry they will be "hate-crimed."

Imagine your own child using "hate-crime" as a verb!

Imagine with me: You really have to go to the bathroom and you can't find a restroom. You have to drive to a number of different establishments to find a restroom. Here's another scenario: you only have only five minutes to get to a bathroom before heading to your next class on the other side of the public school you attend. These are dilemmas my child contends with on a regular basis.

My kid solves this by not drinking water. Imagine what *that* feels like, and now imagine what it feels like to be a parent to a kid who is consciously making the decision to not hydrate.

I hope you'll agree with me that no one should experience physical discomfort because they can't find a place to pee or poop.

But also consider this: shouldn't **everyone** have access to individual gender neutral bathrooms?

Isn't that why Starbucks is our preferred place to stop on road trips?

Example: You realize you just got your period and need to make sure you haven't bleed through your white pants. Would you rather deal with this problem in an individual bathroom or a cramped bathroom stall? *Example:* Your kid's diaper needs changing. Would you rather perform this in a single bathroom or do you prefer changing this diaper in front of everyone on the fold out diaper table while folks watch you cooing at your baby while removing their poop diaper?

We all deserve a little bit of privacy!

Making it hard for trans folks to access bathrooms that they feel safe in is not only silly, it's cruel. And it's unnecessary.

I urge you to vote "no" (ought not to pass) on all five bills before you this morning, because that will send the message that Maine will not discriminate against its transgender youth.

With gratitude for your attention and consideration,

Cate Marvin

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