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Testimony of Representative Laurie Osher in opposition to
**LD 380, An Act to Amend Certain Laws Regarding Gender-
affirming Health Care Services**
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, I am Laurie Osher. I have the privilege of representing House District 25, which is most of Orono. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to LD 380, An Act to Amend Certain Laws Regarding Gender-affirming Health Care Services. I oppose both the original bill and the sponsor's proposed amendment.

Maine has a long tradition of promoting equality and inclusion, and we continue to be a national leader when it comes to enacting policies that protect and affirm our LGBTQ+ communities. An important component of Maine's leadership is the law that the amendment before you today proposes to repeal, which allows 16- and 17-year-old Mainers to access certain types of gender-affirming health care under specific circumstances.

Let's be clear: Gender-affirming health care saves lives. Research shows that access to gender-affirming care greatly improves mental health outcomes for transgender youth¹, lowering rates of depression, anxiety, gender dysphoria, self-harm and suicidality and improving measures of resilience and well-being.²

The research is so clear that every major medical organization - including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association and the American Psychiatric Association, among many others³ - supports providing age-appropriate gender-affirming care for transgender and nonbinary young people. Our medical professionals know that access to gender-affirming care is essential for those who need it.⁴

¹ <https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbtq/gender-affirmative-care>

² <https://www.hrc.org/resources/get-the-facts-on-gender-affirming-care>

³ <https://transhealthproject.org/resources/medical-organization-statements/>

⁴ <https://www.hrc.org/resources/get-the-facts-on-gender-affirming-care>

The professionals that provide these services are providing essential services, using evidence-based standards of care. The timing of that care should not be dictated by state policy; it should be based on those evidence-based standards.

For transgender and non-binary young people, the most important thing the adults in their lives can do is to be supportive. They are looking to us - leaders in their communities and in their state - to understand whether they are valued, accepted and safe. Let's make sure we are showing them that we have their backs. Please oppose LD 380.