

Good morning/afternoon, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for your service and for giving me the opportunity to testify.

My name is Eliza Skillings and I am from North Yarmouth. I was born and raised in Maine, like my father before me, and his father before him.

I am here to speak in opposition to all the bills that the committee will hear today, especially those focussed on sports.

I graduated from Gould Academy and am now a senior at Bates College. During my time at Bates, I raced for their D1 nordic ski team. I was elected captain when I was a sophomore, and spent a minimum of 500 hours per year training to race on the collegiate circuit. I made the NESCAC all academic team every year that I competed. On that circuit, I raced against many women who are now on the US ski team, including Maine's very own olympian, Sophia Laukli. Before arriving at Bates, I was the class B Maine State champion, one of my proudest accomplishments.

I am competitive. I love to win. You don't spend 500 hours a year training, especially for a sport like nordic skiing, if you don't love to win. And it is my ardent belief that trans girls belong in girls sports. In fact, I would give up any of my hard fought victories if it meant that trans girls could compete where they belong, in girls sports.

Because, at the end of the day, sports are about so much more than winning. Sports are about belonging. They are about joy. They are about working hard towards a common goal and realizing that you are part of something that is bigger than yourself. All of you here today, who have competed in sports at any level, know what I mean. You know that what makes sports meaningful is not the number of points scored or how fast you ran the race, it is the joy of belonging to a team, and the satisfaction of working hard and achieving something together.

And these things aren't possible if the only way you can compete is by being part of a team that is not true to your identity.

I imagine that trans girls want what all the rest of us want: to be on the team where they belong. To work towards something bigger than themselves. And to experience the joy and camaraderie of sports. This is what matters to me, as a collegiate athlete. And I know that this mattered to every girl that I raced with and against while I was skiing in college.

Once again, please vote no on all of the bills about trans gender participation in sports that you will hear today. Thank you for your time.