

## Testimony of Carolyn Fish – Bangor Resident, Survivor, and Grandmother

In Support of LD233, LD 868, LD1002, LD1134, LD 1704 LD 1337  
LD1432– May 8, 2025

Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Carolyn Fish from Bangor. I speak as a resident, female, survivor and grandmother of 4 junior high and high school students. While I played sports, I wasn't a star athlete at a petite 110 pounds, but I had the opportunity because I competed with girls. Today I'd likely be benched or cut with boys competing. My granddaughter competed at Colby on the day that is now publicized. I asked her thoughts. She said she felt sorry for the girl who came in 4<sup>th</sup>, and how discouraged and disappointed she must be. Then Asked "when will it happen to me?"

But the bigger issue reaches Far deeper- Privacy, safety and trauma for the girls who have suffered some level of sexual abuse and now have to be exposed to a male in their private space. Unfortunately, at least 1 in 9 girls from 6 to 15 have experienced some type of sexual abuse. However most keep the secret so it's believed to be closer to half. Abuse often happens in silence. Girls don't talk about it—not to their friends, and especially not to the men in their lives due to the shame, emotional pain, and fear. Likely, half the women here know this from experience, others know of someone.

You see, I'm also a survivor. I was just shy of 14 when I was sexually assaulted by someone my family trusted. I'd prefer to continue to keep this private with the handful of people that know, but I **can't**, for the girls and women today. My father was retired military—strict, protective. And yet even he couldn't prevent it. Because predators are clever and often someone we know.

When you force girls and women to share locker rooms or bathrooms with males, you're not just violating their privacy—you're reactivating trauma for those who have and( quite possibly) currently experiencing abuse.

A male may want to identify as a girl, but to a victim they activate fear, and humility triggered by the body they see, not the self-proclaimed identity.

So I ask you plainly: How do you feel about putting countless young girls in situations to feel unsafe and treated unfairly? You say this is a lot of to do about nothing. Tell that to the victims, the girl who came in 4<sup>th</sup> and the others on those teams. You say people have the right to choose how they identify what about the biological girls rights. Some say science supports them. I say, even so, this is not the solution.. Through my voice, survivors **speak** as they still have not yet found the courage or the words to do so. But **you** can **act** and protect girls and women. Please support these bills and support boundaries, fairness, and protect girls' dignity

Thank you