

Rowan Surr Freeport, Maine

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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee.
Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee. My name is Rowan Surr, I'm a resident of Freeport. I am here in opposition of the bills before the committee today.

The supporters of transgender athletics bans say that they are "protecting" girls and ensuring fairness, but the idea that it's unfair for cisgender girls to compete with other athletes only holds water if you believe that cisgender women are inherently weaker than other people. When I was in college I played co-ed full-contact sports, and I can say with certainty that assigned sex at birth has nothing to do with a person's athletic ability. The most formidable members of my team and any team we faced were often cisgender women, even against cisgender men nearly a foot taller, and as someone assigned female at birth I personally never felt intimidated or outmatched by anyone assigned male unless they'd been playing sports longer than me. In contrast, I regularly heard cis men say they were intimidated by cis women players.

If people truly wanted fair sports, all teams would be co-ed and sorted into divisions by height or weight, but issues of fairness only ever come up relating to transgender athletes. In the Olympics, for example, it is common for a sports team from the Netherlands to be on average five inches taller than a sports team from Guatemala, yet people only ever claim a player has a biological advantage if they were born with different genitalia. The highest gendered difference in athletic performance shown in an adult study is under 10%, and the highest in a gradeschool aged study is 5%, with many studies showing little to no difference. Most notably, none of these studies took body size into account, and cisgender men are on average 10% taller than cisgender women and only outperformed them in the relatively few sports where size is an advantage.

I am sure you're going to hear a lot of stories and statistics today about how HRT drastically changes transgender women's muscle and bone mass, but I want you to know that even if a trans girl is not medically transitioning, it is not at all unfair for her to be on a girls' sports team. A ban on transgender girls from girls sports is not only unconstitutional discrimination, it is an insult to the strength, abilities, and confidence of all cisgender girls and women in sports, who would absolutely go toe-to-toe with their cisgender male peers if given the chance, as well as to our cis women firefighters, first responders, and veterans, who have literally carried cis men on their backs in service. By passing bills LD 233, LD 868, or LD 1134, Maine would be unambiguously signing into law that we believe cisgender women are inherently weak and sending a strong message to every cis girl and woman in the state: "Other people will always be better than you." I would be ashamed to live somewhere like that.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on these bills. Thank you.