

Rabbi Lily Solochek  
Nobleboro, Maine  
May 8th, 2025

*Testimony against bills: LD 233; LD 868; LD 1002; LD 1134; LD 1704; LD 1337; LD 1432; LD 230*

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and share my concerns. My name is Rabbi Lily Solochek, I am a resident of Nobleboro. As a transgender faith leader, I am here today in opposition of the bills before the committee.

I speak today as a rabbi, a teacher of the Jewish tradition. Within my tradition, we believe that every human being is created in the Divine Image. This means that we treat each person we encounter with compassion, thoughtfulness and care, including those who are different from us or who we might not fully understand.

We hold the idea of *pikuach nefesh*, the preservation of life, as the highest manifestation of moral action in this world. Within our tradition, saving a life supersedes all other rules or concerns. With this in mind, I appear before you today to urge you to safeguard all Maine children, regardless of their gender identity. As a Mainer, I believe strongly that we have a responsibility to ensure that all youth are able to be themselves, to feel pride in their identities, and to thrive. These bills would actively prevent our Maine youth from being their true selves; they will make school, healthcare, and extracurricular activities a place when trans youth feel afraid, instead of cherished and nurtured.

I speak today as a transgender person, I know firsthand the pain of being excluded and discriminated against because someone may not understand my identity. I am currently a member of a women's sports team that supports and treasures its members with diverse gender identities. We are strengthened by every member of our team, each bringing their own gifts and talents to the community.

I speak today as an educator. I have seen firsthand the incredible gift that transgender youth are to their communities. Trans youth deserve to play with their teammates, to have safe access to bathrooms that match their identities, and to know they can receive medical care without fear.

I speak today as a parent. I want to raise my child in a state that respects and safeguards all its children, that celebrates their identities, and supports their journeys of self discovery. I want my child to grow up in a world where they know that they will be loved and treasured, where their identity will be respected, and where the adults around them seek to build a bright future for each and every child.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote against these bills. Thank you.