

Kelly Maines (she/her)

Gardiner, ME

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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary: my name is Kelly Maines, I am a resident of Gardiner, and I am here today to testify in fervid opposition to bills LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, LD 1704 LD 1137, LD 1432, LD 380.

I can't understand why we are here once again discussing discriminating against Transgender Mainers. They are citizens of this state, they vote and pay taxes, hold jobs, and raise families. Yet every year they have to listen to the people elected and sworn to protect all Mainers debate whether they are worthy of the same rights as everyone else.

Having lived this experience for the whole of my children's lives let me tell you how that feels. As the parent with a transgender child, you fear that because of this hate someone will try to kill your child. You fear that your child will end up with the teacher that has an agenda against transgender people. What if they need medical attention and the medics on the ambulance have the right to deny them care. Then, you get to come here, and in our case, go to court hearings, and listen while people with all the power talk about your child as if they were discussing something no more consequential than picking Thai or burgers for lunch.

These constant bills are nothing short of terrorizing behavior designed to intimidate transgender people and develop unwarranted fear in the rest of Maine's citizens. They don't make people safer or create an equal playing field for anyone. They hurt children like mine, pitting people against each other, and they sanction violence. All this finally stopped for my family, once Maine made it clear that ALL people are created equal and deserving of the same protection under the law. Passing any of these bills undermines what Mainers believe in and opens the door to a roll back of the protections of other minorities. It takes our state backward.

Our state is facing unprecedented troubles too numerous to list here. These bills waste our time, divert our attention, and divide us, making it impossible for us to work together to solve the issues that matter. We must come together as a community, and stop judging each other, to survive these hard times. I implore you to vote "ought not to pass" on all of these hate bills.

Thank you.