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Testimony in opposition:

LD 1704, "An Act to Prohibit a School Administrative Unit from Adopting a Policy That Allows a Student to Use a Restroom Designated for Use by the Opposite Sex"

LD 1134, "An Act to Prohibit Males from Participating in Female Sports or Using Female Facilities"

LD 1002, "An Act to Protect Children's Identification by Requiring Public Schools to Use the Name and Gender Specified on a Child's Birth Certificate"

LD 868, "An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools"

LD 233, "An Act to Prohibit Biological Males from Participating in School Athletic Programs and Activities Designated for Females When State Funding Is Provided to the School"

Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

May 8, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Laura Harper. I'm a senior associate at Moose Ridge Associates and I live in Hallowell. I am here today on behalf of my client, Maine Family Planning (MFP) to speak against LD 1704, "An Act to Prohibit a School Administrative Unit from Adopting a Policy That Allows a Student to Use a Restroom Designated for Use by the Opposite Sex," LD 1134, "An Act to Prohibit Males from Participating in Female Sports or Using Female Facilities," LD 1002, "An Act to Protect Children's Identification by Requiring Public Schools to Use the Name and Gender Specified on a Child's Birth Certificate," LD 868, "An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools," and LD 233, "An Act to Prohibit Biological Males from Participating in School Athletic Programs and Activities Designated for Females When State Funding Is Provided to the School."

MFP provides comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care to teens and adults at 19 locations statewide. Our mission is to ensure that all people have access to high-quality, culturally relevant and affordable sexual and reproductive health care services, comprehensive sexual health education, and the right to control their sexual and reproductive lives.

Trans youth deserve safety, care, and joy. They deserve to dance, draw, dream, and discover. They deserve to run, explore, grow, and simply be kids - without fear, barriers, and without hate. At MFP we stand firmly with trans youth. We believe in their right to healthcare, to self-determination, to celebration - not just survival. We will never stop fighting for a world where trans kids are not only

safe but deeply loved and supported. We are proud to provide gender-affirming care for Mainers. Trans youth belong here. They always have, and they always will.

In calendar year 2024, MFP provided 910 unique patients with gender-affirming care in over 1800 visits statewide. 159 of these patients reside in Aroostook County where MFP's Presque Isle health center is the only provider of gender-affirming care. For many of our patients, we are their lifeline to healthcare provided in a supportive environment, with dignity and respect. Unfortunately this same experience isn't guaranteed for trans Mainers seeking care outside Maine's sexual and reproductive healthcare network. These five bills reflect the bias and transphobia that is all too prevalent and reinforce the stigma and shame our patients deal with every day.

The truth is that these bills discriminate against transgender students, a violation of both state and federal constitutional guarantees of equal protection. Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including against people who are transgender or intersex and the Maine Human Rights Act adopted protections for gender identity in 2005. Furthermore, to enforce the laws proposed by these bills would mean invasive examinations of female athletes and students. It would reinforce gender-based stereotypes by putting public scrutiny on any girl or young woman who looks "too tall" or "too strong" and invite inappropriate scrutinizing of girls' bodies.

Instead, we urge you to support *all* Maine students and uphold Maine law and our constitution. Let's send a strong message to trans youth that they belong here, whether on the field, the ice, or the court. Participating in sports teaches important values like perseverance, dedication, self-assurance, and teamwork. Let's not deprive any student from these opportunities for building strength and self-confidence.

Thank you for your attention and I'm happy to try to answer any questions you may have.