



Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Lisa Margulies, I serve as Vice President of Public Affairs, Maine, for Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, and I am here today to submit testimony in opposition to LD 380.

Planned Parenthood of Northern New England provides comprehensive reproductive and sexual health care in approximately 10,000 visits per year in Maine at four health centers located in Biddeford, Portland, Sanford, and Topsham, as well as online via telehealth. People turn to us for affordable, high-quality care including wellness exams, birth control, disease testing and treatment, cancer screenings, gender-affirming care, abortion care, as well as a variety of primary care services.

As a mission driven health care provider, we fundamentally believe everyone should be able to access affordable, high quality sexual and reproductive health care in their communities, no matter where they live or how much money they make, and we advocate for policies that help make this vision a reality. All people deserve to access comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion and gender-affirming care, free from shame, stigma, and intimidation. We see everyone who comes to us regardless of ability to pay, and in a typical year, we provide more than \$1.2 million in free and discounted care to our communities in Maine. For many, we are their only access to the health care system.

Despite the politicization of gender-affirming care and dangerous attacks on transgender and nonbinary people, Planned Parenthood of Northern New England is proud to provide gender-affirming care, and this care is central to our core mission and commitment to bodily autonomy and self-determination. Gender-affirming care is essential health care that is safe and legal in Maine.

Reproductive rights and LGBTQ+ rights are inextricably intertwined. The fight for reproductive freedom and the fight for gender autonomy are rooted in the fundamental right to control our bodies, health care, and our futures. The same politicians that fought for decades to restrict abortion and overturn *Roe v. Wade* are now using that very same playbook to attack transgender and nonbinary people, their rights, and their health care. These politicians are unqualified to make patients' deeply personal, private, and complex medical decisions.

At Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, we are committed to making our state and our country a place where no one faces discrimination or violence because of their gender identity or expression. We know how absolutely necessary it is for everyone to have bodily autonomy and the ability and resources to make their own health care decisions. We all deserve quality health care, and we all deserve to lead our lives with dignity and agency.



Planned Parenthood of Northern New England strives to make sure the gender identities of transgender and nonbinary patients are acknowledged, respected, and understood. We know that when people are truly seen and cared for, their lives, their families' lives, and their communities are better and healthier. Our health services are open to people of all gender identities and sexual orientations because we believe that everyone deserves high-quality, affordable health care—no matter who they are or where they live. We are committed to improving the way transgender and nonbinary people receive health care in our region, and we work with the LGBTQ+ community to eliminate barriers to care.

As a health care provider, we are dedicated to ensuring our patients, staff, and community lead healthy, productive lives. We know that discrimination against transgender and nonbinary people is real and insidious, and we know that it is escalating in the current political climate. This is dangerous for the health and safety of transgender and nonbinary people. Research shows that heightened discrimination against transgender people results in disproportionately high rates of poverty, homelessness, unemployment, and inadequate health care.ⁱ Transgender people also face high rates of harassment and violence, with nearly one in ten physically attacked and one half verbally harassed in the past year because of their gender identity, along with one half experiencing intimate partner violence.ⁱⁱ

We know that—because of the stigma and discrimination they face—transgender and nonbinary young people are already at higher risk of negative health outcomes than their cis peers, with much higher rates of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation.ⁱⁱⁱ One recent study found that 54% of transgender and non-binary young people had seriously considered suicide in the last year, and 29% made an attempt to end their lives.^{iv}

However, the data show that when they are affirmed in their gender they have comparable outcomes to their peers. Gender-affirming care for young people is safe, lifesaving medical care endorsed by every major medical association, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, The American Medical Association, The American Psychological Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American College of Nurse-Midwives and Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health. A recent study in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Adolescent Health*, the first large-scale research on the mental health effects of hormone therapy for transgender and nonbinary youth, sampled over 9,000 respondents between the ages of 13 and 24 and found that those under 18 who had sought out and received hormone therapy were nearly 40% less likely to report recent depression and a past-year suicide attempt than those who wanted hormone treatment but could not receive it.^v By contrast, when denied treatment and affirmation, transgender people experience high rates of suicidality and negative health outcomes. These health outcomes are worsened as transgender and nonbinary people face increasing stigmatization and prejudice by political actors.



LD 380 seeks to repeal LD 535 (2023), which enables young people 16 and older to access medically necessary gender-affirming hormone therapy without consent from their parent or guardian if a health care professional determines that they are experiencing harm from or are expected to experience harm from not receiving that medical treatment. Quite literally, LD 380 is proposing to take lifesaving medical treatment from young people who *by definition* are already at risk of harm.

LD 380 puts the lives and well-being of transgender young people at risk by attempting to deny them access to health care and support from medical professionals. At no point is a politician more qualified to make decisions about health care than a patient and their medical provider. LD 380 is just another in a dangerous and cruel legislative trend that has emerged over the past few years—placing unnecessary and dangerous restrictions on health care services for transgender people, just as these same politicians have attempted to do for pregnant people.

As legislators, the work you do each day has real and tangible impact on the constituents you serve—and there is real danger in enacting policy proven to harm the health and safety of transgender and nonbinary young people. Recent research shows that the bills being considered today, if passed, could directly and negatively impact the health of transgender and nonbinary young people. In fact, a 2024 study shows laws targeting transgender and nonbinary young people are correlated with up to 72% increase in suicide attempts by those young people.^{vi} Sadly, these types of laws have proliferated in recent years, with 869 anti-trans bills proposed across 49 states in just 2025 alone.^{vii}

LD 380, like the other bills you are considering today, is not about protecting young people: it is a shameful attack on young people—transgender young people specifically—who are already at disproportionate risk of harm due to the discrimination they face. LD 380 is a crude attempt to capitalize on the political climate by amplifying mis- and disinformation, stoking fear and prejudice, and stigmatizing young people who are seeking lifesaving medical care.

We can all agree that young people deserve to lead happy, healthy lives and thrive. I urge you to protect the wellbeing and safety of our young people by rejecting LD 380. Thank you for your commitment to the health and wellbeing, freedom, and dignity of all Mainers.



ⁱ GLAAD, *Debunking the “Bathroom Bill” Myth*, April 2017, https://media.glaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/25203412/Debunking_the_Bathroom_Bill_Myth_2017-305.pdf

ⁱⁱ Violence Against Trans and Non-Binary People, VAWnet, <https://vawnet.org/sc/serving-trans-and-non-binary-survivors-domestic-and-sexual-violence/violence-against-trans-and>

ⁱⁱⁱ Karen Matouk and Melina Walk, *Gender-affirming Care Saves Lives*, Columbia University, March 30, 2022, <https://www.columbiapsychiatry.org/news/gender-affirming-care-saves-lives>

^{iv} Id.

^v James Factora, *Groundbreaking Study Confirms Positive Effects of Hormone Therapy for Trans Youth*, them, December 15, 2021, https://www.them.us/story/trans-youth-hormone-therapy-study-depression#intcid=recommendations_them-verso-hp-trending_5d545b8b-e10b-43b8-ae41-5eb8d8f69c85_popular4-1?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=e7881821-ddc4-4918-bf37-efa6ac3d7e6d

^{vi} Selena Simmons-Duffin, *More trans teens attempted suicide after states passed anti-trans laws, a study shows*, <https://www.npr.org/sections/shots-health-news/2024/09/25/nx-s1-5127347/more-trans-teens-attempted-suicide-after-states-passed-anti-trans-laws-a-study-shows>

^{vii} Trans Legislation Tracker, 2025 anti-trans bills tracker, <https://translegislation.com/>