



May 8, 2025

Re: Opposition to LD1432: An Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identity from the Maine Human Rights Act

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Distinguished Members of the Committee on Judiciary:

I write on behalf of the Maine Psychological Association (MePA), in strong opposition to LD1432: An Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identify from the Maine Human Rights Act.

MePA is a non-profit association that represents psychologists and psychological examiners in Maine. Our mission is to advance psychology as a science, as a profession, and as a means of promoting human welfare. Our membership consists of practicing psychologists, psychological examiners, academicians, researchers, students, and others who are invested in the science and practice of psychology in Maine.

MePA's commitment is to advocate for the mental health and well-being of all Maine persons, including supporting transgender persons and maintaining their inclusion in the Maine Human Rights Act.¹ Gender identity was added as a protected class in 2005 by Maine voters. MePA *strongly* opposes legislation targeting the health and well-being of transgender and gender diverse people; and this is what LD 1432 does by removing gender identity as a protected class.

Psychologists understand that gender is a nonbinary construct that allows for a range of gender identities and that a person's gender identity may not align with their sex assigned at birth. While gender refers to the trait characteristics and behaviors culturally associated with one's sex assigned at birth, in some cases, gender may be distinct from the physical markers of biological sex. Specifically, gender identity refers to "a person's deep felt, inherent sense of being a girl, woman, or female; a boy, a man, or male; a blend of male or female; [or another] gender" (see American Psychological Association's Resolution on Gender Identity Change Efforts, 2021).

There is no scientific basis for discriminating against sexual and gender minorities. In fact, history has repeatedly illustrated that stigma, stereotypes, and propagation of fear are often used as tools in establishing and maintaining oppressive and discriminatory legislation and policy against sexual and gender minorities.² Affirming environments are strongly associated

¹ See APA Resolution on Opposing Discriminatory Laws, Policies, and Practices Aimed at LGBTQ+ Persons at <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/resolution-opposing-discriminatory-laws.pdf>.

² See APA Resolution on Opposing Discriminatory Laws, Policies, and Practices Aimed at LGBTQ+



with reduced rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide risk in transgender youth.

Our position of advocating and supporting all persons is consistent with the guidance of the American Psychological Association, American Psychiatric Association, National Association of Social Workers, American Academy of Pediatrics, and dozens of other leading medical and mental health organizations across the country.

It is for these reasons that we oppose LD1432 and encourage you to vote ought not to pass on this piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Jeff Matranga, PhD, ABPP
Psychologist and President, Maine Psychological Association