



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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May 8, 2025

*Testimony of Representative Laurie Osher in opposition to*  
**LDs 233, 868, 1002, 1134 and 1704**  
*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary*

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, I am Laurie Osher. I have the privilege of representing House District 25, which is most of Orono. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to LDs 233, 868, 1002, 1134 and 1704.

Schools, including school sports, should be a supportive environment that gives every student the opportunity to grow and learn while feeling safe. These proposals would not contribute to such an environment and in fact would cause significant harm to the people that proponents of these policies say they would help.

Bans against trans kids playing sports create an environment where any girl's gender can be questioned - an environment which promotes bullying and harassment based on girls' physical appearance. Further, these bans cannot be enforced without subjecting girls to deeply violating, humiliating and traumatizing invasions of their privacy. The idea that any individual's gender could be open to public scrutiny fosters fear, distrust and confusion - and empowers those who look for opportunities to exert power over others to self-appoint as gatekeepers and accusers. These bans create a climate that has no place in our schools or on our athletic fields.

Participating in school sports can be an empowering experience for young people, boosting confidence and fostering perseverance in the face of challenges. I know that was certainly the case for me as a student athlete. Participating in these experiences is an opportunity that should be available to everyone - including trans girls and any girl who, under policies like these, might be made to feel that they do not belong on the field alongside their classmates.

Existing law at both the state and federal level protects individuals from discrimination based on gender and gender expression. These bills violate those existing laws and constitutional protections. They also target a small group of already vulnerable kids who deserve to be safe, valued and supported just as much as any other young person in our state.

Please oppose LDs 233, 868, 1002, 1134 and 1704. Thank you for your consideration.



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May 8, 2025

*Testimony of Representative Laurie Osher in opposition to*  
**LD 1337, An Act to Amend the Maine Human Rights Act Regarding Female  
Athletes and Safety in Women's Single-sex Shelters, and**  
**LD 1432, An Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identity from the Maine  
Human Rights Act**  
*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary*

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, I am Laurie Osher. I have the privilege of representing House District 25, which is most of Orono. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to LDs 1337 and 1432, bills which seek to remove gender identity protections from the Maine Human Rights Act.

Maine has a long tradition of promoting equality and inclusion, and we continue to be a national leader when it comes to enacting policies that protect and affirm our LGBTQ+ communities. Maine voters and the representatives they elect have repeatedly chosen equality: in marriage, with protections from discrimination and violence, and in gender equality. I am so proud of this tradition, which is one of the many reasons I am so grateful to call this place my home.

The Maine Human Rights Act has included protections for all Mainers regardless of their gender identity for two decades, reflecting a longtime recognition that everyone who lives here deserves to lead lives free of fear or harm due to discrimination. Maine voters have affirmed this at the ballot box.

These bills would undermine our leadership on protecting equality by rolling back long-standing legal protections. This would leave Mainers more vulnerable to discrimination in the future than they have been for the past 20 years.

Passing these bills would be an assault on these protections and a violation of Maine's state slogan – "The Way Life Should Be".

Please oppose LDs 1337 and 1432. Thank you for your consideration.



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May 8, 2025

*Testimony of Representative Laurie Osher in opposition to*  
**LD 380, An Act to Amend Certain Laws Regarding Gender-affirming Health Care Services**  
*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary*

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, I am Laurie Osher. I have the privilege of representing House District 25, which is most of Orono. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to LD 380, An Act to Amend Certain Laws Regarding Gender-affirming Health Care Services. I oppose both the original bill and the sponsor's proposed amendment.

Maine has a long tradition of promoting equality and inclusion, and we continue to be a national leader when it comes to enacting policies that protect and affirm our LGBTQ+ communities. An important component of Maine's leadership is the law that the amendment before you today proposes to repeal, which allows 16- and 17-year-old Mainers to access certain types of gender-affirming health care under specific circumstances.

Let's be clear: Gender-affirming health care saves lives. Research shows that access to gender-affirming care greatly improves mental health outcomes for transgender youth<sup>1</sup>, lowering rates of depression, anxiety, gender dysphoria, self-harm and suicidality and improving measures of resilience and well-being.<sup>2</sup>

The research is so clear that every major medical organization - including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association and the American Psychiatric Association, among many others<sup>3</sup> - supports providing age-appropriate gender-affirming care for transgender and nonbinary young people. Our medical professionals know that access to gender-affirming care is essential for those who need it.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbtq/gender-affirmative-care>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hrc.org/resources/get-the-facts-on-gender-affirming-care>

<sup>3</sup> <https://transhealthproject.org/resources/medical-organization-statements/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.hrc.org/resources/get-the-facts-on-gender-affirming-care>

The professionals that provide these services are providing essential services, using evidence-based standards of care. The timing of that care should not be dictated by state policy; it should be based on those evidence-based standards.

For transgender and non-binary young people, the most important thing the adults in their lives can do is to be supportive. They are looking to us - leaders in their communities and in their state - to understand whether they are valued, accepted and safe. Let's make sure we are showing them that we have their backs. Please oppose LD 380.