

Peggy Smith

Lincolntonville, ME

May 8, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee.

Thank you for granting me this opportunity to testify today from a Buddhist perspective.

I am part of the clergy delegation opposing bills LD 1337, LD 1432 and LD 380.

I am an ordained Buddhist teacher within the Plum Village Buddhist Tradition.

The core teaching of Buddhism is that kindness & compassion are the keys to reducing pain and suffering. We are instructed to look deeply into how to reduce suffering within ourselves, our families and society.

I am confident that everyone in this room wants healthy, safe and supportive communities within our State. We are not each other's enemies. Where we may differ is how to move toward this goal.

Within our faith community we have 5 ethical guidelines. I would like to share a portion of one:

"We are committed to cultivating the 4 basic elements of true love ~ kindness, compassion, joy and inclusiveness ~ for the greater happiness of ourselves and society..... Recognizing the diversity of the human experience we are committed NOT to discriminate against any form of gender identity or sexual orientation. Practicing true love, we know we will continue beautifully into the future."

I respectfully ask the committee to vote NO on any bill which would take a legal protection away from any member of our precious Maine community, so that we can all continue into the future together with harmony and grace.