

Kathleen Meil
26 Curtis Avenue
Camden, ME 04843

Testimony in opposition to:

- **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
- **LD 868**: An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools
- **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 1134**: An Act to Prohibit Males from Participating in Female Sports or Using Female Facilities
- **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 1337**: An Act to Amend the Maine Human Rights Act Regarding Female Athletes and Safety in Women's Single-sex Shelters
- **LD 1432**: An Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identity from the Maine Human Rights Act
- **LD 380**: An Act to Amend Certain Laws Regarding Gender-affirming Health Care Services

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Kathleen Meil. I am a resident of Camden and the proud mother of two boys – one cis-gender and one transgender. **I testify in strong opposition to all eight of the bills before you today, and especially to LD 1432, which encapsulates their collective attempt to dehumanize transgender Mainers.**

As a mom, I've spent plenty of nights staring at the ceiling, wondering how to best support my sons. I bet every parent has. We've all been the source of solace after the mean thing said at school – or of the thoughtless thing said at home that begged for solace from the world. Growing up and becoming who you are is never easy, and when a gender transition is required, the road is even more fraught. The toll of misunderstanding and doubt – from within, from those who love you most, and from the broader community – can feel unbearable. In fact, many *don't* bear it. Almost half of young transgender and nonbinary people seriously considered suicide last year, and 14% made an attempt.¹ That's twice the rate of their cis-gender peers. These are terrifying statistics, and trust me, the lived experience is even worse.

As a mom, I hate that I can't always make it better – and I hate that you're sitting here today, debating whether to intentionally make it worse. Laws like the ones you're considering today *do* make it worse: suicide attempts among trans and nonbinary people jump by 72% in states that pass anti-trans bills like these.²

My oldest son almost didn't survive his adolescence, but today – thanks to gender affirming care and a community that affirms his inherent value and human rights – he is thriving. Every trans child, parent, friend, *person* deserves “the basic human right to a life with dignity” ensured by the Maine Human Rights Act (Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §4552).

Do not erode those rights. Do not purposely devalue the lives of already vulnerable people. Don't turn Maine law into the cudgel of bullies. *Please*, vote “Ought not to Pass” on these bills.

Thank you.

¹ <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2024/#mental-health-suicide-risk>

²

https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-024-01979-5.epdf?sharing_token=EbX7LsH7-AF5n99850vpnNRgN0jAjWel9jnR3ZoTv0PNveFIXHsicugelq3jvq1Wcsju1CXHxspC9onbX6frEcU1-J5M25MI5piLTNjBr959LGK7ejPr20VtTVSb18ArMIJnGNGgZYyU9CJQoJuUjN01H4VVGluDqO_epnWlg_A%3D