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LD 1432 An Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identity from the Maine Human Rights Act

Good Afternoon Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Maureen Richards and I live in Cumberland Country. I am proud to live in a state where people value working together to create policies that protect and grow the rights and safety of all our Maine citizens, not limit them. I do not support LD 1432. Removing gender identity from the Maine Human Rights Act would create the opportunity that discrimination can happen in the workforce, housing, businesses, and health care. Let's not take a step backwards. It does not make sense to take away the rights of a group of people, making them more vulnerable to prejudice and discrimination, plus endangering their emotional and physical safety to reach a goal of protecting the rights and the safety of another group of people. Everyone's rights and safety are important. I have been told this bill, LD1432, has been created because the argument being made for not complying with President Trump's executive order regarding transgender athletes is that the order violates the Maine Human Rights Act, which means the executive order is illegal. I understand people have strong opinions about this. Think of what this bill does though. It removes a group of people from our Maine Human Rights Act based on their gender identity. Why would we do something with such long term damaging ramifications? It is not effective to combat what you think is wrong with another wrong. Let's work together to continue to create policies and laws that show we value safety, equality, kindness, and respect for all.

Resources:

<https://transequality.org>

Transgender is a broad term that can be used to describe people whose gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be when they were born. "Trans" is often used as shorthand for transgender.

To treat a transgender person with respect, you treat them according to their gender identity, not their sex at birth. So, someone who lives as a woman today is called a transgender woman and should be referred to as "she" and "her." A transgender man lives as a man today and should be referred to as "he" and "him."

Gender identity is your internal knowledge of your gender – for example, your knowledge that you're a man, a woman, or another gender.

Cisgender: If someone's gender identity matches the gender they were assigned at birth, then they are cisgender.

Maine Medical Specialty Care:

- Biological sex is a person's sex assigned at birth based on external genitalia; however, sex is actually external genitalia, internal organs, chromosomes, and types & amounts of hormones which are only determined by testing which most people do not do. Internal organs are missed when assigning sex at birth. Using the term biological sex flattens the nuance of these number of facets.
- A lot of variations of intersex - this term is an umbrella to acknowledge that it exists
- Language that is respectful is transgender girls playing alongside/together with cisgender girls.
- Best practice is to be specific about what you mean - and being respectful and inclusive to acknowledge transgender people exist
- Use girls/women, boys/men rather than male/female

Advocacy groups in Maine to learn more about & explore partnering with: The Maine Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, Equality Maine, Maine Women's Lobby