

Rachel Casey
Gray, Maine
May 8, 2025

RE: Testimony in Opposition to LDs 233, 380, 868, 1002, 1134, 1337, 1432, and 1704

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to share my testimony with you. My name is Rachel Casey. I am a resident of Gray, a social worker, an academic, and a referee with Maine Roller Derby. I am here to ask that you oppose all of the bills before the committee today.

As a referee for the high intensity sport of roller derby, my role is twofold: to ensure games are safe and to ensure games are fair. As in many contact sports, a hard hit in roller derby can cause devastating injuries. I myself suffered a concussion two years ago when a hip check took me by surprise. Because I know how life changing such injuries can be, I take my responsibilities as a referee very seriously. I can say with confidence that none of these bills will make the sport of roller derby or any other sport safer for ciswomen like myself. There are many factors that contribute to injuries in derby, but skating with trans athletes is not one of them. These bills are not necessary to ensure the safety of women in sports. Actually, these bills would hurt cisgender women and girls who would lose the opportunity to play with and learn from our trans peers. Of course, these bills would also hurt the trans athletes whose dignity they would strip away. In my experience, skaters feel safest when all athletes are welcomed and treated with respect.

As a referee, I am also deeply concerned about fairness. Like most sports, roller derby has a governing body that provides rulesets and robust guidance for ensuring fair gameplay. As such, state laws designed to address concerns about fairness in sports are unnecessary and unhelpful. I have never seen a roller derby athlete's gender identity convey a competitive advantage. Rather, it is the unique combination of skills, training, and passion that gives each athlete their individual edge. If the honorable members of this committee wish to express their commitment to fairness, you can do so by opposing bills that would discriminate against an already vulnerable group on the basis of constitutionally protected identity categories.

In summary, trans athletes belong on the roller derby track and everywhere else that people experience the joys and thrills of sporting competition! I ask that you vote "ought not to pass" on each of these bills. Thank you for your time and consideration.