

May 8, 2025

Honorable Committee members, thank you for your time. My name is Susan Casavant and I live in Woolwich Maine, I am a retired military spouse and the mother of a transgender woman.. I am scared for the future of my only child. She is leaving the country in search of a better life, and I don't blame her.

There are a number of anti-trans (and anti-intersex) bills being introduced in Maine this legislative session and I urge you to vote no on all of them. Make no mistake: these bills are not about protecting girls. I wish our society cared so much about girls. They are about power and the systematic destruction of our Democracy. The playbook is as old as time: divide and conquer. Throughout history, men have twisted religion and used their misinterpretation as a cudgel to gain power, demonizing minority groups and scapegoating them for all of society's ills. These proposed laws will harm girls, not protect them.

How can girls have privacy when their gender is being policed? Who gets to decide who is a girl? Gender is not always obvious. What happens if someone alleges your daughter is trans?

What is happening here is laid out clearly in the 900+ page Project 2025 Mandate, written by evangelical nationalists who want to destroy this country and rebuild it in their image. In the Project 2025 forward, they state one of their primary goals is to "Secure our God-given individual rights to [...]the Blessings of Liberty," but then they **redefine** the blessings of liberty as the "pursuit of Blessedness [...]" an individual must be free to live as his Creator **ordained** [...]Our Constitution grants each of us the liberty to do not what we want, but what we **ought**."

This is "what we **ought**": according to evangelicals, not Catholics, not mainstream Protestants, not Methodists, not Jewish people, not Muslims, not Universalists. Evangelical nationalists want an authoritarian president to impose "**what we ought**." They want our Democratic Republic to become an Evangelical Theocracy.

Two-thirds of the executive orders this year came directly from Project 2025. Statistically, that cannot be a coincidence. Read it for yourselves. You don't have to read the whole thing: the forward alone **outlines their plan to impose evangelical ideology on us all**.

The first page of the forward conflates transgenderism and pornography. That is where their minds go. My child is not pornography. She is an introvert who just wants to be left alone. She doesn't even wear makeup or shorts in public. She is a college graduate, avid reader, and nature lover. These proposed laws not only deny history, science, and religion. They deny the dignity and humanity of trans and intersex people.

Project 2025 lauds the "healthy" family as a man,a woman,and children. This definition pointedly excludes all LGBTQ people. The evangelical nationalists are **just starting** their attack on the LGBTQ community by denying the existence of trans and intersex people—allowing only for men and women, and only their definition of those terms. By saying trans people don't exist, they are saying trans people are either imagining they are trans, i.e. mentally ill and delusional, or they are liars and frauds therefore criminal.

The evangelical church claims that God created only men and women, but this is one of the ways the nationalists twist religion to their purposes. They ignore Bible verses that do not support their cause, such as Matthew 19:12, " For there are Eunuchs who were born that way," and Galatians 3:28: "There is neither male nor female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." I refuse to call the evangelical nationalists Christian, because their actions show un-Christlike **animus** at every turn.

They start with trans sports bans, because these are the easiest-first steps on a slippery slope.. They fearmonger and tell you you have to protect your girls. They say that trans women have an unfair advantage, but they do not differentiate between sports where there is no possible advantage, such as chess or beauty pageants. These bans include elementary schools, when there is no advantage pre-puberty. This is evidence of **animus**, not a desire to protect girls.

As far as sports where there could be an advantage, this is not new, we have been dealing with gender variations in sports for 90 years, since the 1936 Olympics, known as Hitler's games. Two athletes were rumoured to be men. Since no gender verification program existed, the Olympic committee felt compelled to perform a **crude physical inspection** and confirmed one athlete had female external genitalia. Is this what you would want for your daughter?

Allegations continued over the years, and compulsory gynecological exams were introduced prior to the 1966 European Athletics championship. Athletes were forced to stand naked in front of a committee and their external genitalia was inspected. Two hundred forty-three women attended the examination, and no "abnormalities" were found. Two athletes did not attend and never competed again. **This was the result of supposedly "protecting" girls.** It became increasingly apparent that these examinations were intrusive, harmful, and unacceptable.

Later they began DNA testing elite athletes. Current testing of elite athletes is regulated by the corresponding professional sports organizations. This testing is expensive and invasive. Are we going to start this for all sports participation? In high schools? In middle schools?

In reality, the disadvantage and discrimination strongly targets and burdens trans athletes. The NCAA has 500,000 players, and only 10 are trans. As approximately 1% of people are trans, there should be close to 5000 trans athletes in the NCAA. This alone shows that **trans athletes are already being excluded** (even though their exclusion is illegal). The athletes these proposed laws would target are extremely rare. The uproar around trans athletes is a **distraction** from the true purpose of Project 2025.

This President's Department of Homeland Security recently updated its policy manual and removed provisions that protected people from investigation based solely on sexual orientation or gender identity. They didn't bother with changing the law. The administration just decided they can now spy on LGBTQ citizens with no probable cause, which is illegal. You may think *so what, that doesn't apply to me*, but who decides who is LGBTQ? Apparently, making America great again means going back to McCarthy era **animus**.

Trans and intersex people have existed throughout history. Many civilizations did and still do recognize more than two genders. If this administration was telling us the truth about trans people, why would they need to erase trans history and medical research? Erasing history is a part of an authoritarian/fascist playbook. This administration has removed references to trans people from the Stonewall National Monument, from medical research on the National Institute of Health website, and more. The State Department travel safety website has removed the TQI from the LGB travel warnings. In other words, the state longer warns trans, queer, and intersex communities when they may be in danger while traveling abroad. This is clear **animus**.

Identifying people as their gender assigned at birth is not based in science or reality. We do not do genetic testing at birth, so that assignment is merely a guess. Sixteen states now issue birth certificates with X gender markers, and many states change gender markers upon request. Approximately 1% of people identify as trans and 1.7% of people have an intersex condition. There are more than 30 identified

intersex conditions to date. These people deserve equity in society. We cannot claim equality while denying the rights of an entire class of people.

Multiple federal judges have found this administration's executive orders regarding trans people to be based in **animus and to be discriminatory and unscientific**. A Montana judge recently found that their adult bathroom ban was based on **animus** and that **no evidence had been provided that the ban protected women's safety or privacy**. In addition, the ban effectively barred intersex people from using any gendered bathroom at all.

Another Montana district judge recently reversed a state healthcare ban and found that there is **overwhelming medical evidence that trans youth healthcare is appropriate, safe, and effective**. The Ohio Appeals court also reversed a state healthcare ban.

Recent studies show that states that have passed anti-trans bans, allowing politicians to make medical decisions, have seen suicide rates of trans and non-binary youth increase up to 72% in children 13 to 17 and 44% in youth 13 to 24. The CDC reports that 1 in 4 trans youth attempted suicide within the past year. **These bans are killing our children, and they do not protect girls, but make all girls subject to gender policing**. The American Psychological Association, the largest psychological association in the world, has condemned bans on gender affirming care.

The majority of the EU has issued a strong critique of the medical "evidence" being used to support these anti-trans bans. In addition France, Finland, Denmark and Germany have issued travel warnings for their LGBTQ citizens. Many of our LGBTQ citizens as well as our scientists are leaving the country to avoid these oppressive laws and regressive policies. Is this what we want for Maine?

LD868 creates extensive classes of action and is an attorney's dream and a nightmare for schools, teachers, and affiliated sports organizations. Its definitions of sex, male, and female are dubious and do not cover the range of human variation. Teachers are already being threatened for merely respecting their students' right to self-identify. **Now we want to make teachers, schools, gyms, and sports organizations responsible for policing gendered spaces or they can be sued**. Why not put this time, energy and money into creating more privacy, such as bathroom doors that go to the floor and lock. Most teenagers, no matter their gender, do not want to change in front of a group of people and would benefit from privacy.

This legislation will not end with the transgender and intersex community. These won't be the last anti-trans laws proposed. Just look at the **progression** in other states. This administration is dismantling our government, rule of law, and separation of church and state. Instead of dealing with these core challenges we are being distracted by the 850+ anti-trans bills that have been introduced nationwide in 2025 alone-you have 8 on your agenda today.. Do you really believe the tiny trans and intersex population deserves this degree of vitriol and scrutiny? **This is misdirection**, and it ends with us living in an authoritarian theocracy. My husband swore an oath to uphold our constitution, not some twisted evangelical revision of it. **Protect the U.S. Constitution and our religious freedom. Vote no** on these hateful bills.