



**MAINE ROLLER DERBY**

**May 8, 2025**

**To: The Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee.**

**From: MAINE ROLLER DERBY. PO BOX 8413, Portland, ME 04104-8413**

**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, thank you for the opportunity to address the committee. My name is Melissa Prescott, and I live in Norway, Maine. I serve as Chair of the Board of Directors for Maine Roller Derby (MRD), a 501(c)(3) organization based in Portland, Maine - and a proud member of the Women's Flat Track Derby Association (WFTDA) since 2006.

**I'm here today to submit testimony on behalf of MRD to express our strong opposition to LDs 233, 380, 868, 1002, 1134, 1337, 1432, and 1704.** These bills would impose harmful and discriminatory restrictions on transgender, intersex, and gender-expansive athletes—and are a direct threat to our organization, our members, and their families.

At MRD, we are committed to fostering an inclusive environment where all athletes can thrive. Our league embraces a gender policy for skating members welcoming those who “identify as female, non-binary, gender expansive, or who feel most comfortable skating with a women’s roller derby league.” We also welcome contributing members, officials, and volunteers of all genders, and are bolstered by the range of experiences included in our community.

The WFTDA is the international governing body for women’s flat track roller derby, representing over 400 leagues across six continents. In 2011, after consultation with legal and medical experts, the WFTDA adopted a gender policy inclusive of transgender athletes. In 2023, that language was updated to include all “marginalized genders”—a policy MRD fully supports.

Transgender athletes, like all athletes, bring their unique energy to the track. Despite fear-mongering, the vast majority of top WFTDA athletes remain cisgender women. Many years of playing this full-contact sport with gender-expansive athletes has shown that inclusion doesn’t weaken women’s sports or push out cisgender women—it strengthens them and creates more community.

We believe sports should be welcoming, safe, and accessible—and these bills do the opposite. Instead of protecting women and girls, they invite invasive “gender checks,” violate privacy, erode trust, and enable bullying—especially targeting athletes of color and those who don’t conform to narrow gender norms.

In addition, the Maine Human Rights Act already prohibits discrimination based on gender identity. These bills contradict those protections, as well as Title IX and the U.S. Constitution's guarantee of equal protection.

We know that sports build confidence, leadership, teamwork, and a sense of belonging—benefits every person deserves, no matter their gender. These bills threaten to deny those vital benefits, promoting exclusion and undermining the very purpose of sports: to uplift, connect, and empower.

Women's sports are NOT supported by harassing minors or threatening Maine schools.  
Women's sports are NOT supported by excluding athletes of marginalized genders.  
And women's sports are NOT supported by intimidating athletes, sowing fear, or creating barriers to participation.

We urge you to vote **Ought Not To Pass** to reject all of these bills and stand for fairness, dignity, and equality.

Every person in Maine deserves the chance to play, compete, and thrive—just as they are.

**Thank you for your time and consideration.**

Sincerely,

Melissa Prescott (aka Frida Rockit), she/her  
Chair, Maine Roller Derby  
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**May 8, 2025**

**To: The Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee.**

**From: MELISSA PRESCOTT - 12 WALKER AVE. NORWAY, ME 04268**

**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, thank you for the opportunity to address you today. My name is Melissa Prescott, and I live in Norway, Maine. I'm a middle school art teacher and a proud member of Maine Roller Derby. I am testifying in strong opposition to LDs 233, 380, 868, 1002, 1134, 1337, 1432, and 1704, which reflect a harmful nationwide attack on transgender, intersex, and gender-nonconforming people.

Supporters of these bills claim they are about fairness. But what does "fair" really mean? Is it fair to deny a child the opportunity to play sports with their friends simply because of who they are? Is it fair to isolate trans youth, who already face higher rates of bullying, depression, and suicide?

As a teacher for over 20 years and an advisor to my school's civil rights team, I've seen how crucial it is to create welcoming and inclusive environments for all students, including trans and nonbinary youth. These students deserve the same opportunities to participate in sports, to belong, and to thrive. Sports are not just games — they are community connections, leadership training, and powerful suicide prevention. Is it fair to take that away because of gender identity?

As an athlete and official with over a decade of roller derby experience, I've skated with athletes of all genders, including trans women and nonbinary skaters. The claim that trans athletes have an unfair advantage is not grounded in reality. Some of the hardest hits I've taken came from cisgender women. What matters in roller derby — as in all sports — is skill, strategy, and teamwork. How is it fair to strip trans athletes of the chance to compete based on unfounded fears?

Discriminating against trans athletes doesn't protect women. It worsens things for all women by encouraging scrutiny of our bodies. Who decides who is "woman enough" for a locker room or team? If someone decides I don't look feminine enough, how should I prove my gender? This is not fairness — it's fear disguised as protection. And what about intersex people, whose existence doesn't fit into a binary? Do we erase them, too, in the name of fairness?

Roller derby is often called "the island of misfit toys," a place where all identities and bodies are welcome. Because I was accepted into this community, I've gained strength, leadership skills, global community empowerment, and lifelong friendships. I would never deny anyone those opportunities because of their gender identity, and neither should anyone concerned about fairness.

Additionally, some of these bills go beyond sports and directly attack trans students' basic rights — forcing them to be deadnamed (LD 1002), stripping away protections for gender identity (LD

1432), and barring them from bathrooms and healthcare (LD 868, LD 1704, LD 380). These policies do nothing to protect anyone and harm vulnerable youth by stripping away their dignity and rights.

"Unfair" is too weak a word for these bills — they are acts of violence against our citizens, attempting to erase them. These bills will cause immeasurable harm.

I urge you to vote **Ought Not to Pass** and reject these bills. Ask yourselves, "What is truly fair?" We all deserve the opportunity to thrive, to live authentically, and to be respected. Let's protect everyone's right to live their truth without fear of discrimination.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee today, and thank you all for your time and commitment to justice.

Sincerely,  
Melissa Prescott, she/her  
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