

testimony - thank you!

From: Sarah J. Rogers (sarah.j.rogers@dartmouth.edu)

To: chacocente@yahoo.com

Date: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 at 05:14 PM EDT

**Bills to be presented to the Maine Judiciary Committee on Thursday, May 8, 2025**

**Morning block:**

-----  
**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**

**Purpose:** This bill would ban any school that receives state funding from allowing transgender girls to participate in school sports.

My name is Sarah Rogers. I am a retired college professor living in Westport Island, ME. Thanks for hearing my testimony today.

The supporters of this bill think it will promote safety and fairness to non-trans girls, and its detractors fear the consequences of trans exclusion. Let me comment first on safety and fairness.

In the case of prepubescent trans girls, the answer is clear: there is no physical justification [1, 2] to ban them from female teams. For this youngest group, it is actually non-trans girls who have an overall physical advantage, because they undergo puberty a year and a half earlier.

After male puberty in early high school, trans girls do, on average, have a physical edge. But the statistics do not show that trans girl athletes cause more injuries than cisgender girls. In fact, studies show the opposite [3].

Regarding fairness, the main purpose of K-12 sports is not about winning, but rather fitness, enjoyment, and team building. Moreover, significantly less than 1% of high school athletes is a trans girl, presumably due persecution. Their fears are well-founded: 40% of trans high schoolers report being bullied and a quarter (26% [4]) attempt suicide [4]. This bill would increase the nearly intolerable levels of rejection these trans students already experience, while helping practically nobody.

I urge you to vote against it. Thank you.

1. "Performance development in adolescent track and field athletes according to age, sex and sport discipline", E. Tennessean et. al. PLoS One, Published online June 4, 2015:1-10.

Doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0129014

2. "Fairness for Transgender People in Sport", J. Safer, J Endor Soc., Volume 6, Issue 5, May 2022, bvac035, <https://doi.org/10.1210/jendso/bvac035>

3. "Study Exposes High Injury Rates in Transgender Women", Radiological Society of North America, press release on December 4, 2024

4. "Disparities in School Connectedness, Unstable Housing, Experiences of Violence, Mental Health and Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors Among Transgender and Cisgender High School Students — Youth Risk Behavior Survey, United States, 2023", CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), Supplements / October 10, 2024 / 73(4);50-58

---

**LD 868: An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools**

**Purpose:** This bill would ban transgender girls from school sports. It goes further than other bills by also banning trans and non-binary students from using the bathrooms and locker rooms that align with their gender identity.

I have already spoken against a ban on trans girls from female school sports.

Many studies and reports [1] have established that trans-inclusive policies for bathrooms and locker rooms do not increase safety risks to cisgender women or girls. On the other hand, there is substantial evidence showing that trans teens forced to use facilities reserved exclusively for their sex assigned at birth have a much greater risk of assault [2].

Excluding trans kids from sports teams or facilities that align with their gender identity will cause them significant harm, while helping nobody. Please vote against this bill. Thank you.

1. Hasenbush, A., Flores, A.R., & Herman, J.L. (2019), Gender identity nondiscrimination laws in public accommodations: A review of evidence regarding safety and privacy in public restrooms, locker rooms, and changing rooms. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 16(1), 70-83.
2. "Transgender teens with restricted bathroom access at high risk of sexual assault", Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, May 7, 2019

---

**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**

**Purpose:** This bill would require schools to refer to a student by the name and gender on their birth certificate, unless a parent gives written permission to use a different name and/or gender, or documents detailing a legal change are provided to a school.

It is distressing for a transgender person to be addressed by their dead name and pronouns. When I am addressed by my chosen name (Sarah) or my preferred pronouns (she/her), I get a mood lift, which is the opposite of my reaction to the old male versions of these. Trans students already suffer from highly elevated risks of depression and suicide. I can say from my own experience that trying to extinguish someone's gender identity will not make it go away. Attempting to do so, however, will cause them certain harm.

This bill would inflict needless and pointless cruelty on our children. Please vote against it.

---

**LD 1134: An Act to Prohibit Males from Participating in Female Sports or Using Female Facilities**

**Purpose:** This bill would ban any schools receiving state funding from allowing transgender girls to participate in school sports. Additionally, it would ban trans girls from using school facilities "designated for use solely by females." The bill is vague, and the meaning of "facilities" is unclear—this could potentially include a bathroom ban, taking us back more than a decade to debate an issue that has long been settled.

This seems like a repeat of the above two (LD 868 and LD 1002)?

-----

**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**

**Purpose:** This bill is a "bathroom ban" that would prohibit schools from creating policies allowing students to use a bathroom if that bathroom does not correspond to the student's sex assigned at birth.

This seems like a repeat of the above two (LD 868 and LD 1002 and thus also 1134)?

-----

**Afternoon block:**

-----

**LD 1337: An Act to Amend the Maine Human Rights Act Regarding Female Athletes and Safety in Women's Single-sex Shelters**

**Purpose:** This bill would exempt privately owned shelters providing emergency service to women from anti-discrimination requirements as detailed in the Maine Human Rights Act (MHRA). This bill also amends the MHRA to align with Federal Title IX analysis related to rights of female athletes.

Transgender adults earn less than cisgender people [1] and are more likely to live in poverty due to discrimination, barriers to education, and greater rates of psychiatric illness. Trans people have more than four times the unemployment rate of the general population (18% vs. 4% [2]) and are three times as likely to live in poverty (about 23% vs. 8% [3]). A disproportionate share receives insurance coverage through Medicaid (21% vs. 14% [4]). The statistics are even worse [5] for transgender minority groups and families with young children.

A lack of sufficient housing is among the gravest disadvantages of all. Trans people are five times as likely to be evicted from housing (13% vs. 2.3% [6]), and nearly one-third (30% [7]) have experienced homelessness in their lifetimes. This bill would make these statistics even worse. Shelters for such people can be lifesaving, and this persecuted group has few other places to turn. It would be inhumane to make the safety net for our most vulnerable citizens even smaller.

Please reject this bill. Thank you.

1. "The Wage Gap Among LGBTQ+ Workers in the United States", HRC Foundation report, 2021
2. "Early Insights: A Report of the 2022 U.S. Transgender Survey", James et. al., National Center for Transgender Equality, Feb. 2024

3. "LGBT Poverty in the United States", Badgett, M., Choi, S., Wilson, B., Williams Institute, UCLA, October 2019
4. "Trans People in the U.S.: Identities, Demographics, and Wellbeing", L. Dawson et. al., KFF report, Sept. 28, 2023
5. "Being Transgender at Work", Baboolall et. al., McKinsey & Company, 2021
6. KFF/The Washington Post Trans Survey, Kirzinger et. al., March 2023
7. "How Many Adults and Youth Identify as Transgender in the United States?", Herman, J., Flores, A., O'Neill, K., Williams Institute, UCLA, June 2022

---

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

Purpose: This bill would remove all references to "gender identity" as a protected class in the Maine Human Rights Act. Because discrimination against queer and trans people is technically discrimination on the basis of sex and/or sexual orientation, it is not immediately clear what effect removing "gender identity" would have on protections for trans Mainers.

Trans people are among the most disadvantaged communities in our society. We urgently need legal protection from prejudice and discrimination.

When it comes to employment, I admit I am not typical — I am a retired professor. I was too afraid to come out as openly trans until after I retired. As in many jobs, there is heavy competition for hiring and promotion, and it would have taken only a slight amount of negative bias to block my success.

Sublimating my identity during my career exacted a heavy price -- I eventually had to leave my job due to suicidal depression. I wish such hard choices in our society were never necessary. Please do your part to ensure this and vote against this bill. Thank you.

---

#### LD 380: An Act to Amend Certain Laws Regarding Gender-affirming Health Care Services

Purpose: This bill would repeal the current process by which a minor consents to gender-affirming hormone therapy and follow-up care, which would result in a prohibition on minors age 16 to 18 receiving gender-affirming care unless the minor child has parent or guardian consent.

Trans people exhibit alarming frequencies of depression and suicide [1]. The main cause is an inescapable feeling that one's core identity is in conflict with one's body. This depression is known as gender dysphoria (GD) [2].

The medical gold-standard [2] approach to GD, endorsed by every major medical association in the US, is so-called gender affirming hormone therapy. It is elected by about 1 in 20 trans youth [3] and is used only when it is medically necessary to alleviate serious depression and risk of self-harm. Gender affirming surgeries are also highly effective but are exceedingly rare in young people (1 in 50,000 [4]).

The most common type of hormone therapy, and usually the first to be tried, are puberty blockers. Puberty in a young person can produce intense and life-threatening distress.

If the blocker therapy is discontinued, normal development recommences as though the medications had never been taken [5].

The possibility of future regret grips most parents with terror. As a parent of two kids, it would for me too. But regrets arise in fewer than 1% of patients [6]. This risk is worth taking when the patient is actively suicidal.

I am a case in point. Hormone therapy saved my life. I felt an improvement after only one tiny dose. If such medical options are withheld from young people, many will die by their own hand.

I urge you to vote against this bill. Thanks for listening.

1. "More than 40% of transgender adults in the US have attempted suicide", UCLA-Williams Institute Press Release, July 20, 2023
  2. "Prevalence and Determinants of Depressive and Anxiety Symptoms among Transgender People: Results of a Survey", A. Hajek et. al. Healthcare (Basel). 2023 Feb 27;11(5):705.doi: 10.3390/healthcare11050705
  3. "Gender-Affirming Medications Among Transgender Adolescents in the US, 2018-2022", L. Hughes et. al., JAMA Pediatric. 2025;179(3):342-344.doi:10.1001/jamaperdiatrics.2004.6081
  4. "Prevalence of Gender-Affirming Surgical Procedures Among Minors and Adults in the US", D. Day et. al., Jama Network Surgery Research Letter, JAMA Network Open. 2024;7(6):e2418814.doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.18814
  5. "Puberty blockers for transgender and gender-diverse youth", Mayo Clinic website 2025: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/gender-dysphoria/in-depth/pubertal-blockers/art-20459075>
  6. "Regret Rates for Transgender Surgery are Practically Non-Existent", GenderGP, October 2024
-