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LD 233, LD 1134, LD 868, LD1704

Good Morning Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Maureen Richards and I am a resident of Cumberland County. As we discuss these bills, everyone should remember the importance of using correct terminology relative to a topic in order to have respectful conversations around it. I also ask that when people discuss transgender athletes, they make statements that are factual and do not make assumptions or judgements. Athletes play sports for a variety of reasons including friendships, physical activity, and for the mental and physical health benefits - not to take away opportunities from others. I agree with the statement made "we want every girl seen and heard." Every girl includes cisgender and transgender girls. Let's involve medical professionals who have an expertise in gender care to make informed decisions, free of bias and unfounded claims, as well as inclusive groups, as we create fair, safe, and equitable athletic opportunities for all our youth.

I do not support any bill that bans a person's use of a public bathroom. I am here to advocate for providing bathroom and locker rooms that are inclusive and safe for everyone without stepping back in time and discriminating against any population. There are many reasons a person may not feel comfortable in these places. Let's work to address these issues, but not take away anyone's rights in doing so.

If a person is uncomfortable using a bathroom because of another person who is using it, they have the option of waiting outside until that person has left. But, depriving a transgender person the right to use the bathroom of their gender is discrimination. Where else will they go to take care of this basic human need? If anyone is displaying inappropriate behavior in any location, it needs to be reported. It doesn't matter if the person is straight, gay, cisgender, or transgender, it needs to be addressed. It doesn't mean you ban a specific group of people - that is discrimination. We have grown and learned from our history, and we strive to create laws and climates that are inclusive.

Think of this situation, a transgender man with a beard and a deep voice is forced by law to enter a women's bathroom because his sex assigned at birth was female. How would a woman in that bathroom feel seeing him walk in? Wouldn't she feel more comfortable if a transgender woman who had feminine characteristics walked in? Forcing a transgender person to use a bathroom that does not align with their gender could also put them in a vulnerable position of being victims of hate crimes. Let's work together to ensure we provide access to comfortable, safe, and inclusive facilities for everyone to take care of their basic needs - a right no person should be deprived of.

## **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