

Katherine Abate  
Skowhegan  
LD 227

Hello and thank you for taking the time to read this. My name is Katherine Abate, I am a 35 years old and a mother of two small children.

I often wonder what world I have brought them into, if I made the right choice. I guide them to care about what happens in our community/state/country because I believe we are a great nation.

I want to continue to believe this. I cannot imagine a world where a child who is incapable of using their entire brain is at the forefront of such decisions. I say this with this most respect for anyone who has experienced gender dysphoria because long ago I was one of those children.

When I was 9 years old I had already been wearing boys clothes for a year and my mom let me cut my hair just like my boy cousins. Remember the 90s? Classic bowl with the buzz cut underneath.

I wanted to be tough, and to be entirely honest I think I needed to be because of some things I grew up around. I liked doing boy things and hated it when my father and stepmother who lived in MA would try and dress me pretty when I went there. My mom was different, more accepting and I enjoyed my life with her and my older sister in Maine, lived there all my life.

When I was 10 something happened, I don't have all the details but my dad got custody of me and took me away to MA. He told me it was only for a year and because I had already spent so much time there growing up, had my own bedroom I was used too, I settled with the thought.

The next year came and my dad and stepmom told me I wasn't going back. My 11 year old mind, heart, soul, everything broke. I have struggled with separation anxiety my entire life because of this. I would have done anything to get back to my mom and older sister, anything.

I was always being picked on in school in MA kids made fun of me because I looked like a boy or was trying too. I had a counselor in school but my dad and stepmom also put me in a private one, back then they weren't telling kids they can change their sex. I did have some friends, the outcasts mostly but for some reason the popular girls pulled me in for awhile and I learned about drinking slimfast and getting fake IDs. If I wanted to find an older friend to take me back to Maine I could have easily. Unfortunately anyone that knew me as a child knew I was trouble.

I fought so hard to be the person I am today. A little girl who thought she needed to be tough and was desperate to get back to her family grew into a strong woman who eventually made it back to her family and is now raising two beautiful children of her own in Maine.

This bill would have taken this from me. This bill would have taken my life.

I was 11 when I was desperately trying to flee MA.

LD 227 has no age limitation.

Please vote ought not to pass.