

Kristen Chapman
Sumner
LD 227

Dear Senator Bailey, Representative Perry and Members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee,

I OPPOSE LD 227 for many reasons, a few of which I spoke to when I delivered my testimony in person on March 5, 2024. I was unable to provide written testimony at that time, as I had minimal time to prepare my thoughts due to the 21-page amendment to this Concept Draft having not been posted on this legislative website. In fact, as of this writing, two days after the hearing, only the Concept Draft is posted; the 21-page amendment STILL remains unposted. Thankfully, I was able to request a copy of this amendment directly from a legislator. As I testified, this lack of transparency regarding legislative proceedings, not in full view of the public, causes me to conclude that LD 227 in it's proposed amended form is activist legislation pushed by the legislative majority.

Among my many, MANY concerns with LD 227 is the language used in this document, language that is threatening and damaging to the emotional well-being of children caught in the power struggle of disagreeing parents, guardians or family members, or those in the midst of custody battles. Some question the role that schools will have, should this proposed legislation be passed. In the summary located on page 19, the phrases "interference with access," "attempted provision of gender-affirming care," "hostile litigation," "prohibits the arrest of," "prohibits public agencies from... furtherance of an investigation," and "legally-protected healthcare" are among just some of the alarming choice words that speak to the precarious position minors will be placed in. These phrases also allude to the conflicts that will come when challenged by Constitutional rights, Federal and other state's laws, as well as law enforcement and parental rights and court rulings. Many other citizens have spoken at the public hearing to these legal interferences and overreaches far better than I feel I can, but it bears repeating that this proposed legislation is way outside the bounds of the State of Maine's jurisdiction.

I am also alarmed by the protections given to the medical providers who would be carrying out these life-altering gender-related treatments and/or surgeries on minors, without fear of repercussion. This 21-page amendment is broadly-written and it is unclear to me what kind of parameters these surgeons will have with these life-altering, relatively-new types of surgeries. Since there is wording within this document that medical providers do not need to be licensed in their home state, what kind of protections are in place to guard the well-being of the patients who would be receiving these treatments/procedures in Maine, licensed within this state? Surely the wording I am reading within the Summary raises the issue that Maine could draw inexperienced practitioners or those who may have suspended healthcare licenses in other states who would have more latitude to practice here in Maine. Let's not advertise Maine as a state that is experimenting on the bodies of her precious children (or on those minors who are transported here across State lines!) I will also add that LD 1619 already expanded abortion access; why is it included within this proposed bill? It should not be the job of the State of Maine to shield surgeons/medical providers from what their own state may not legally allow.

My concerns with LD 227 are many, and I will repeat that I have still not adequately comprehended the potential ramifications of this 21-page amendment. I merely listed just a few that I spoke to in the public hearing two days ago. Please consider the testimonies of my fellow citizens who OPPOSED LD 227 in it's amended form, as there are MANY issues here to consider. I implore this committee to oppose, to VOTE OUGHT NOT TO PASS this sloppy and dangerous piece of proposed legislation.

Kristen Chapman