

The First Parish in Portland, Maine, Unitarian Universalist

425 Congress Street • Portland ME 04101
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The First Parish is a Welcoming Congregation



May 8, 2025

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

As the ordained minister at First Parish Unitarian Universalist in Portland, I serve the 350-year-old congregation that housed the drafting of the Maine Constitution in 1820. I write today with gratitude for your commitment to serving the State of Maine, and offer the following testimony in opposition to: LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, and LD 1704

As a Unitarian Universalist, my faith is grounded in the sacred nature of every human being *and* in the findings of science and medicine. Together, these sources of understanding tell me that the transgender experience is real and rich and complex. Those who are transgender should enjoy the full range of opportunities to grow and learn and succeed. To deny their right to participate in school sports goes against this nation's – and this state's – commitment to ensuring that every person has access to personal growth and development.

Banning trans and non-binary students from facilities aligned with their gender identity, denies them the right “of pursuing and obtaining safety” named in the Maine Constitution’s Declaration of Rights. Bills such as LD 868 speak of ensuring “Equity and Safety,” but the exact opposite is likely to be the case. Transgender girls forced to use bathrooms designated for cisgender men will be at risk of bullying and harassment. Bills such as LD 1002 and LD 1134 fly in the face of science, reason, and medicine. They remove opportunities – and limit the rights – of our transgender siblings while paving the way for science-deniers to have undue control over individual lives.

I believe there is a “divine spark” within each of us. That spark is brought to light through a personal journey that extends throughout our lives – beginning in childhood. No one – and no state – has the right to disrupt that process of discovery by pretending to know better than the individual the truth of their innermost being. Bills such as LD 1002 threaten to disrupt that sacred journey of discovery.

I ask you to consider all the above – in your hearts and in your minds – and bring an end to the ignorance and harm that are embedded in these bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Norman Allen'.

Rev. Norman Allen

Member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

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