

May 8, 2025, Augusta, Maine Written Testimony submitted to the Judiciary Committee of the Maine State Legislature

FROM: Katrina Bisheimer, a resident of Bucksport, Maine since 2003.

TO: Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to submit my written testimony in opposition to all 8 bills your Committee is looking at today; LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, and LD 1704 -- in your 9:30 a.m. session, LD 1337 and LD 1432 -- in your 1 p.m. session, And LD 380 -- in your 3 p.m. session.

I have been a competitive runner competing in numerous road races throughout the state of Maine. None of these bills are about protection of women, they are all about transphobia. The development of scientifically based guidelines for each sport is the best way to come closest to fairness. Science can examine the impact of hormone levels, development, and impact on performance, rather than discriminating / invalidating transgender persons ability to compete in sports. Trans rights are human rights and all women should be able to compete in sports. Inclusion in sports can foster self esteem which can transfer to other areas of youth's lives and help them reach their full potential.

Insisting that teachers address students by their name and gender specified on the child's birth certificate unless parents provide written permission and legal documentation is overreach based on absolute transphobia and imposes unnecessary hardship on the family, It is harmful to the child's development and the school community because it stigmatizes them.

I have been a certified psychiatric nurse since 1996, and from this perspective have developed an understanding of the traumatic impact of "othering" people that are different from us. Transgender youth have seven-fold times the risk for suicide. LGBTQ+ youth are not inherently prone to suicide risk because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, but rather because of how they are mistreated and stigmatized in society. As a psychiatric nurse I am legally responsible for caring for patients, which includes a duty to minimize / reduce harm whenever possible. Therefore, it is absolutely

unconscionable for medical professional not to advocate for gender affirming care when it is indicated; something which may actually help reduce the burden of suicide among this group.

I feel it is morally repulsive that a safe shelter could restrict a transgender female. Domestic violence affects individuals of all gender identities, with transgender people facing particularly high risks. More than half, or 54 percent, of transgender and non-binary individuals have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) in their lifetimes, according to the Human Right Campaign. That's significantly higher than the general population, in which 41 percent of women and 26 percent of men have encountered such violence, according to the CDC.

Transgender survivors often encounter significant obstacles when trying to access support, including rejection by family and friends, discrimination in shelters, and a lack of transgender-specific resources. Gendered shelter systems and harmful stereotypes frequently deny transgender women access to safe spaces, despite state protections against discrimination.

It should be a requirement that such a facility have the capacity to problem solve this in a way that allows all people a sense of safety versus discriminating against transgender women by denying them access to safe sanctuary when most needed, and thus further marginalizing them.