

Testimony against LD 1337 and LD 1432

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

Today you have the power to affirm Mainers lives and identities or write into law exclusions that undermine their established freedoms.

As a life long Mainer and someone who has been here since 7:00 am today, I implore you to consider the implications of your votes. I ask you listen to this testimony closely as I have respectfully

Maine has a choice. We can lead, with integrity and conscience OR follow a nation spiraling over hypothetical fears and made up threats. Worse yet, these issues aren't from here. As we say in Maine - this issue is "from away".

Given our motto, - I lead. I question the authenticity of Mainers willing to succumb to ideas from away. As a life long Maine Educator - I can tell you that these are not issues being discussed in our schools. Not before a Maine politician made it a platform.

These concerns are not based on incidents. In fact, Maine has policy regulating this inclusion and practices to resolve issues. Despite all that proactive support and planning, there have been no incidents to resolve. These inflated concerns are instead being used to target the equal rights of Maines minority populations.

These ills stoke fear AND Fear is a dangerous thing.

In old New England, fears led them to burn women, not "witches." Today in Maine, these bills don't target "trans kids"—they target children. Real, breathing, hoping, Maine citizens.

Our state motto is "Dirigo"—I lead. For two decades, Maine has led with inclusive policies that protect the dignity and rights of all our people. Will we now abandon that leadership to join states racing backward? Will we tell some of our children they don't deserve the same opportunities as their peers?

The supporters of these bills have shared concerns and fears.

Those in opposition are sharing facts from more than 20 years of participation, evidence based research, and personal accounts from our lives.

While all stories are valid and important - there is a distinct difference between evidence and concern. There is a reason we require evidence based curriculums in education. Facts matter. Language matters.

Finally, and because many of the supporters of these bills will undoubtedly have argued parental rights, let me say the following.

As a life-long educator and now administrator I can tell you that schools never willing subvert parental rights.

Parental rights are important.

But they do not overrule human rights. This is why we have Child Protective Services Domestic Violence laws because we acknowledge parents don't always do what is right by their children. This is why we have rules and regulations to protect children when their respective adults do not.

Thank you for your time - I ask you to vote Ought not to pass on all trans exclusion bills and legislation based on the premise of fear mongering without relevant Maine facts to support their argument.

This is why they have brought forward stories from away to make their point.

Thank you