

Testimony Opposing LD 1134

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Helen Cohen. As a lifelong Mainer, I oppose LD 1134; it is yet another attempt to legislate transgender children out of public life. Maine voters have demonstrated multiple times that our state holds a strong commitment to providing safe, inclusive environments for all children for the past 20 years. This proposed bill is an example of government overreach, dictating school policy with no regard for local decision-making, student needs, or voters.

Claims of 'protecting girls' are being weaponized to push trans youth out of public life, not to solve real problems. GLSEN has found that trans students vary in athletic ability just like their peers and that well-developed eligibility policies and support structures already exist to ensure fairness *without discrimination*. Transgender youth already face elevated risks of bullying, anxiety, and suicide. Bills like this one make those outcomes more likely.

Thank you for letting me share my perspective with the Committee. If a bill singles out and excludes a group of children from basic school life, it doesn't matter how it's framed, it is discriminatory. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on this bill.

Sincerely,

Helen Cohen