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Portland, Maine
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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Sydney Cotter, I'm a resident of Portland and I writing in opposition of LD 380.

I began my transition at age 31, and I always say my only regret is that I didn't start sooner. At 5 years old, I loved pretending my barbie dolls had huge muscles and rescued damsels in distress, at 12 I spent hours playing video games that let me play as the "boy" character, and at 16 I started wondering what I would look like if I cut my hair reallllly short... At age 31 I finally realized I was the one who wanted the huge muscles. My point is, trans people are always trans, whether they're finger painting in kindergarten or winning big at senior citizen bingo night.

According to a study published in the Cambridge University Press, transgender individuals usually become aware of being transgender by the age of 5. Surely, by age 16, we are then capable of beginning to make decisions about our own bodies.

These changes to Maine law are unnecessary, and help no one. Repealing Maine's Shield Law would subject Maine's already-strained healthcare infrastructure to out-of-state criminal prosecutions for providing standard-of-care healthcare as legally allowed in this state. Maine state law has allowed doctors and patients to safely give and receive the care they need, and LD 380 would especially cause great harm to health care providers.

I never knew true happiness until I transitioned and got the opportunity to live my life as my authentic self for the first time after over thirty years of being trapped in a cage. Every trans person, no matter what their age deserves to have the opportunity to access gender affirming services and medical care. I ask you, please just let us be who we are meant to be.

I implore all Mainers to stand up against anti-trans hysteria. Let's show that we can think for ourselves, pave our own way, and create laws using facts rather than cruel fictions based in fear and ignorance.

I urge committee members to vote ought not to pass on LD 380.

Works Cited:

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/bjpsych-bulletin/article/transgender-children-and-young-people-how-the-evidence-can-point-the-way-forward/8EC51645D88DD4B9A2655DC63BB6513E>