

To: Judiciary Committee

From: Hadley Couraud

Date: May 8, 2025

RE: Testimony in opposition of L.D. 233 “An Act to Prohibit Biological Males from Participating in School Athletic Programs and Activities Designated for Females When State Funding is Provided to the School”

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

Thank you for this opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Hadley Couraud, and I live in Norway, ME; I am writing to you today as a concerned citizen. I am testifying in opposition to L.D. 233, “An Act to Prohibit Biological Males from Participating in School Athletic Programs and Activities Designated for Females When State Funding is Provided to the School”. When I moved to Maine seven years ago, I was struck by the commitment to community found all over the State. Now as a grateful resident of Maine, I know that the well-being of our youth and youth athletes is critical to the fabric of that culture.

This ban would invite any person to call for an invasive ‘gender check’ on any girl who wants to play sports if she appears ‘too tall’ or ‘too strong’. It would embolden spectators, competitors, or community members to bully and harass girls by accusing them of being trans and subjecting them to intense scrutiny based on restrictive gender norms. This risks further amplifying dangerous patterns of harmful body image and self-confidence that is already experienced at alarming levels in school-aged girls. At this age, young women, and even more so those of color, face intense pressure to look certain ways, which can lead to eating disorders, mental health challenges, or even self-harming thoughts. This additional and unnecessary scrutiny will heighten pressures for all young women, not just trans girls.

Furthermore, the ability to participate in sports during school is an invaluable experience – teaching core values such as perseverance, dedication, self-assurance, and teamwork. Encouraging more student participation will offer this to more Mainers rather than putting up even more barriers to young women than they already face, by subjecting them to invasive interrogation or risk of public ridicule.

I implore you - please - use your power to step up and protect the rights and well-being of young women and athletes in our schools. I urge you to oppose L.D. 233. Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Respectfully,
Hadley Couraud