

Catherine Cyrus
Brunswick
LD 868

Dear members of the Judiciary Committee,

I write this testimony in question and concern about bills LD 233; LD 868; LD1002; LD1134; LD 1704; 1337; LD 1432 and LD 380.

The intention of these bills seems to be to “protect” the rest of us from some undefined and illusive danger associated with trans people. The bills do not recognize the humanity or the oppression of the human beings who happen to be trans and who are struggling to express who they are within a culture that will not see or respect the legitimacy of their lives. It is the trans community that needs protection – the protection of the very laws that these bills would negate.

The bans suggested in these bills would invite potentially invasive or traumatizing “gender checks” on girls and young women – trans and straight alike - who want to play sports but don’t meet some elusive standard of female-ness – perhaps being “too tall” or “too strong”. They invite harassment and bullying from spectators and others. They promote fear, distrust and confusion for students, families and educators.

There are already rules in place in school districts to make sports as fair and safe as possible for all participants. All athletes – trans and non-trans - have varying degrees of ability, drive and conditioning. Being a trans athlete is no guarantee of success or failure.

These bills threaten to upend the supportive environment we want for our schools where everyone can receive an education and participate in school activities. Participating in sports should teach values like perseverance, dedication, self-assurance and teamwork. These bills would put up barriers for girls across Maine and potentially subject them to the risk of invasive interrogation and public ridicule. We have more to learn about how to build a fair, compassionate and safe community for everyone, but these bills will not guide us in that direction.

Thank you for your attention.

Catherine Cyrus
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