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

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee through written testimony. My name is Samuel Dahlin and I am a resident of Portland, Maine and I am submitting testimony as a person of faith, and a parent of two young children. I am submitting this testimony in opposition of the bills before the committee today.

As a parent I am concerned about the harm that would be caused by these bills. I want my children to feel that school is a safe place for them to be who they are. For each of them to be able to participate in sports if they choose to. I do not want my daughter to be subjected to invasive interrogation if she wants to join a sports team at school. As a parent, I know these bills would leave ALL girls vulnerable to scrutiny and harassment. These bans would invite any person to call for an invasive or traumatizing “gender check” on any girl who wants to play sports if they think she is “too tall” or “too strong.” These bans empower schools to engage in policing adherence to gender norms, which unfairly scrutinizes girls’ bodies, and have been shown to affect girls of color even more. These bans will cause fear, distrust, and confusion for students, families, and educators.

When my daughter starts school, I want her to feel safe and supported and I believe these bans would do the opposite.

As a person of faith, I believe all people are made in the image of God, and all people are created in the fullness and diversity of life. Jesus speaks of walking alongside those who are being oppressed, who are marginalized, these bills do the opposite. Transgender individuals are human beings, they are loved by God. These bills take away their humanity.

I hope our legislators will choose to do the right thing to protect all youth and families, which includes trans youth. All Mainers and their families deserve the opportunity to live a life that is free, safe, and thriving.

Thank you for reading my testimony.