

Committee on Judiciary:

LD 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

LD 868 – An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools

LD 1134 – An Act to Prohibit Males from Participating in Female Sports or Using Female Facilities

May 8, 2025

Dear Senator Anne Carney, Representative Amy Kuhn and distinguished members of the Committee on Judiciary, my name is Evie DalPra, I am 19 years old and I have been a resident of Alfred and Lyman for my entire life. I am speaking to you today as someone who swam competitively from 3rd grade through my junior year of high school with Massabesic schools and with Sanford-Springvale YMCA alongside transgender athletes.

During my time as a swimmer I was in the top 10 in the state for one of my events along with one of my best friends at the time, who ranked higher than me. We swam together from a very young age until I stopped swimming in my junior year. During our time on the Massabesic team we swam the same events at every meet, always being pinned against each other and I loved the competition. Even though I never won, they inspired me to strive to do better. They were one of the hardest workers on the team, and it showed. Their sophomore year of highschool they came out to me as transgender and changed their name, but it did not change our relationship or their ability to beat me in the pool. They had always been better than me and it didn't matter that they changed their name and the gender that they identified with, they still continued to beat me in the pool. That is why I believe athletic success isn't determined solely by gender. Like other athletes, trans athletes vary in ability, drive and conditioning. Being a trans athlete is no guarantee of great success or failure.

When I think about these bans on transgender athletes and what they propose, I am scared for all the girls I knew during my time as a swimmer and all the girls that are there now. 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." The people I swam with were often taller than all the other girls, stronger than everyone else because they were *athletes*, but it was not these physical features that

made them the people we now cheer on at college meets, it was the work and dedication they put into training every single day.

This work and dedication also lead to the incredible bonds that were formed during practices and meets between us as teammates but also as friends. Participating in sports teaches everyone important values like perseverance, dedication, self-assurance, and teamwork. We should want more young people to play sports, not put up barriers for girls across Maine that subject them to invasive interrogation or make them risk public ridicule. Schools should create a supportive environment where every student can receive an education and participate in school activities.

Everyone deserves the chance to access the social, mental, and physical benefits from school sports free of judgement, harassment, and investigation. As I can tell you, competing against a transgender person changes nothing, it is the dedication you alone put into the sport that makes you a great athlete. That is why today, I urge you to vote “Ought Not To Pass” on LD 223, 868, and 1134. Protect the right play for all women and girls.

Thank you,

Evie DalPra