

Steve DeAngelis
Readfield, ME
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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee.”

Thanks for the chance to speak before the Judicial Committee today.

My name is Steve DeAngelis, I live in Readfield and my testimony today is informed by the 40+ years I spent as a high school teacher and coach at Maranacook. That experience leads me to speak in opposition to the bills before you this morning and this afternoon.

Over the years, the teams I coached won over 30 State Championships. I feel good about that accomplishment, but I am most proud of the fact that during my coaching career. I helped around 1400 young people experience what it feels like to be part of a committed team. To figure out, that whether you were the best skier on the team, a beginner, or anything in between you could experience athletic and personal growth and contribute to the team's success. Every person should have the opportunity to have such a transformative experience and the fact that the bills before you this morning are aimed at stopping a very small number of individuals, from having that opportunity is chilling. We need to do everything in our power to insure that ALL kids have every opportunity to grow and be themselves.

In addition, all of these bills put adults in the position of surveilling kids bodies. If you are surveilling teenage girls about their bodies (to see if they are “feminine enough”), then you are surveilling all bodies. I think that would be an abhorrent practice.

I know that is tempting to fear things we don't understand. I will be the first to admit that I don't understand the hows and whys of a person's transgender identity. But I don't need to understand, I just know that transgender folks are people and they deserve all the rights and opportunities that should extend to all people.

Thanks for the opportunity to share my perspective with the committee. I urge you to not legislate out of fear of the unknown and to trust those closest to the issue - coaches, athletes, and the Maine Principals Association to figure out how to include ALL kids in athletics in a fair and safe manner. Please vote “ought not to pass” on these bills. Thank you