

Elliott Eastman
Topsham
LD 1134

Hello Representative Campbell, Representative Caruso, Representative Lyman, Senator Bernard, Representative Smith, and committee. My name is Elliott Eastman from Topsham and as a transgender man and an athlete, I urge you to vote against bills, LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, LD 1704, LD 1337, LD 1432, and LD 380.

I am from Corinna originally, where I ran on the Nokomis varsity track and cross country team. Running is an outlet for my emotions, and a way to feel free. I am a very competitive person, and I have seen a wide range of abilities in my years of running. Given the nature of cross country and a lack of numbers for some of the competitions, I would frequently run with the boys. There were some girls that were naturally much faster than most or in some cases all of the boys in certain races. Athletes' abilities are often the result of genetics, hard work, and a bit of luck. I now run for MECTA (Maine corporate track association) on the men's team. The joy and the mindset that a competitive sport offers, brings me to push myself to constantly do better lasts a lifetime. These bills don't only harm trans people. It takes opportunity away from all athletes by introducing unfair and unnecessary practices.

As for my day to day life, finding a public restroom, something that cisgender people pay little time thinking about, can prove to be a daunting task. There is a constant fear that I am going to be harassed for a basic human function by using the bathroom that my gender identity aligns with.

In any setting, singling out an already marginalized group can be isolating and traumatic. In 2023, I found myself at WCCC and had to room with two cisgender women as the school did not have co-ed housing. Because of this, I was singled out even more. Despite having understanding roommates, my experience with housing was detrimental to my mental health and caused me to ultimately abandon my schooling. These bills take away opportunity and single out an already marginalized group.

When I came out as transgender, I was 19. It took me several years to go through all the legal work that comes with a name change. I had a lot of supportive family, but that is not everyone's story. I had several friends in school that were not out at home and it was dangerous for them to be. If educators and staff were required to gain permission before referring to a student as their preferred name and pronouns, it could have put numerous people in difficult and dangerous situations. This could leave children with nowhere to go. There is no benefit to this bill. It only causes harm to a child that cannot change who they are.

Gender affirming care saves lives. It's proven to be safe, effective and has been used for decades. Countless research has been done to back its safety. I can attest to this as I benefit from having access to hormone replacement therapy. It has vastly improved my mental health and helps me live a full life. My ability to access doctors who provide this is the reason I am here today.

History will tell you that transgender people have been around for thousands of years. We have always been here, and we always will be. Trans people just want the same thing as everybody else, to live happy, full, and fulfilling lives. Don't take the chance of that away from us and vote against bills, LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, LD 1704, LD 1337, LD 1432, and LD 380 Thank you.