

Testimony

Dear all,

I'm writing as someone who is not from Maine, but came here in highschool and will forever think of Maine as my second home. Mainly because my school in Maine was the first place where I, a young queer kid, felt welcomed. It was a place where I could finally be myself without feeling unsafe. I was a trans child back then and I am a trans adult now. And that's the whole deal - my young trans self was no threat to my fellow classmates, soccer teammates or roommates at the dorm, just like my now adult self poses no threat to my coworkers or academic colleagues. It was the cis children and adults from my previous school that endangered the few queer kids that went there. All trans kids want - just like all kids - is to live normal happy lives, without feeling excluded, unsafe, unwanted. Trans youth have the highest risk of suicidal behavior of all groups. Being trans is difficult by itself - facing lack of support, discrimination and bullying on top of that highly increases the risk of depression, anxiety, self harm and suicidal behavior. However, social sphere is one thing, state legislation is a whole another level. Discrimination and humiliation of trans children caused by anti-trans legislation helps no one, but causes harm to everyone, including the cis children. There is no good reason to go backwards when it comes to being respectful and welcoming to all. Targetting such a vulnerable group is senseless and cruel, no political goal can ever excuse that. All children deserve to be happy, not only the ones fortunate enough to be born cis. I ask you to keep Maine as welcoming and kind as it has been to me.

Thank you.