

Good afternoon, and thank you for taking the time to read my testimony. My name is Alice Frost, and I am a transgender woman from Kennebec county. I am a local activist who has experience facilitating transgender support groups. In these meetings, I have listened to many folks share their experiences navigating the world as transgender people. I also have lived the transgender experience myself. With this background, I can confidently say I speak from a place of authority when it comes to the concerns and hopes of transgender people. Therefore, I recommend to the Judiciary Committee that gender identity should NOT be removed from the Maine Human Rights Act.

In the transgender support groups, many of the people I've spoken to have talked about experiences of being harassed in the workplace. They spoke of being called slurs, being threatened, and having private information shared amongst coworkers in efforts to humiliate them. Many spoke of periods of homelessness they experienced, being pushed onto the streets by their families and being rejected from shelters. Others spoke about being afraid to leave their houses, afraid that if someone harassed or threatened them on the street, nobody would care or stand by them. The Maine Human Rights Act gives rights and protections to transgender people for these situations. Losing that protection would only embolden bigots even further to harass, harm, or bully transgender Mainers. It would result in more violence, homelessness, and self harm in our community. I don't know anyone who wants that for Maine.

I believe that every act has a spirit behind it; an ideal that stands above the written words. The spirit behind this act is an ugly ghoul manifested from hatred and misinformation. The same ghoul that had our federal government illegally withhold funds for school lunches just to prevent a handful of children from playing sports. This is not the spirit found in the Mainers I see in my daily life. I reaffirm my belief that gender identity should not be removed from the Maine Human Rights Act. Thank you again for reading my testimony.