

Patricia Goodhines
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LD 1704

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Bangor, Maine
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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee:

As a clinical psychologist, I know that LD 1704 and similar bills would be simply devastating to Maine children and communities. This proposed bathroom bill will take us back more than a decade to debate an issue that has long been settled. We know that anti-trans legislation such as bathroom bans cause depression and suicide in trans youth, and makes them targets of bullying and life-threatening violence. Bills like this are quite literally a matter of life or death for some of our state's most vulnerable children.

Tell me then, will this bill really protect our children? Why are trans children, a very very small percentage of our state's population, being targeted so aggressively and violently? Will you side with Maine children, or will you side with their bullies?

Because these bans have far-reaching and damaging effects for ALL children, not just trans children. Gender-based bathroom/facilities bans empower schools to engage in policing adherence to gender norms, which unfairly scrutinizes girls' bodies especially. These bans would invite any person to call for an invasive or traumatizing "gender check" on ANY child who does not look feminine/masculine "enough." If you claim to care about the safety of children and women, you must NOT support this invasive bill.

Maine must stand up against the national political agenda interfering with our rights to make our own laws. Any attempt to enforce this bathroom bill blatantly violates the privacy of all Maine women and girls. Further, bills that discriminate against transgender students violate both state and federal constitutional guarantees of equal protection. They will open the door and set a dangerous precedent for more extreme anti-trans legislation, further endangering Mainers. LD 1704 is simply discriminatory on the basis of sex and it is NOT constitutional.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. Changes to Maine law are unnecessary, and help no one--but the risks of harm are substantial. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on LD 1704 and similar bills today. Thank you.