

I am Suzanne P Gordon, a Maine citizen living at 22 Hamlin Street, Orono, ME. I wish to testify against the passage of LD 1704.

I am both morally and ethically opposed to this LD and to efforts to marginalize and demonize transgendered and gender nonconforming individuals. I believe that all people, regardless of difference, have the right to dignity, autonomy, emotional and physical safety, health, education, and access to a productive life. It is appalling that this group has been singled out for public humiliation and cruel generalizations. Even worse, the deplorable efforts to remove civil rights to this group of people, many who are children, threaten all of us and our collective civil rights.

The overwhelming social effect of these and other LDs targeting nonbinary and transgender people is to create divisiveness, hate, and misinformation. The premise of such LDs appears to be the mistaken belief that there are only two sexes, and if someone identifies differently, they are dangerous. Ridiculous. While the two X and Y chromosomes most typically combine to produce XX female and XY male individuals, there are many other combinations that do not conform to this binary. Individuals with alternative sexual genotypes may not identify to a gender identity that society expects them to – a gender identity that conforms to their appearance. While gender identity differences are not thoroughly understood, other physiological factors (hormones influencing fetal brain development, hormones influencing sexual development, actual brain construction, psychosocial factors) are well-known complications to an individual's internal sense of gender identification. Legislative efforts to dismiss the needs and rights of this group of children, adolescents, and adults appear to be an attempt to dismiss the realities of physiology and its effects on a person's development. These very real physiologic differences are not a reason for legislative marginalization, removal of healthcare options, exposure to unsafe environments, and shame.

Again, I oppose the passage of LD 1704.