

Emory Harger
Searsmont
LD 1432

My name is Emory, I am a resident of Searsmont, and I am a transgender American. I urge you to act with common decency and respect to ALL Mainers, including our youth, including transgender youth, and vote no on LD 1432.

My experience as a transgender adult comes with many many joys, happiness, a sense of self, community, and belonging. Also freedom — I love living in Maine because it is a state that prides itself in giving each individual the right to live as they please. This includes respecting the right for transgender people to exist in public and live in our communities in the same ways all other members of our communities can.

However, because of the discrimination transgender people face everyday, I also face a lot of hardship, hatred, and fear from people in my community. I am regularly harassed in public bathrooms. As a transgender masculine person, if I use the men's restroom I fear assault. If I use the women's restroom (my assigned sex at birth) women are scared of me because I look like a man. Where would you like us to go? We are allowed to live in Maine and live freely just like our neighbors, and that is what the Maine Human Rights Act solidifies.

Ask yourselves why are these anti-trans bills coming up now when the Maine Human Rights Act adopted protections for gender identity twenty years ago? Passing these bills would reward the federal government's bullying tactics and open the door for further attacks on ALL Mainers' civil rights. Right now, it is transgender rights, but what about when the federal government comes for your rights next? Will we concede or stand up for our states rights?

This feels like such a waste of all of our time, standing up here arguing for our rights against these absurd bills when people in Maine need political leaders to put their energy on quality education, affordable housing, healthcare, natural resources, and issues that are really affecting us; not targeting 1% of the population who face no substantiated threat in our schools and communities. I urge you to act with common decency and respect to ALL youth, including transgender youth, and vote no on LD 1432.