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Spoken Testimony Against LD 1337, LD 1432, and LD 380

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to address the Committee!

My name is Nicholas Herold and I live in Portland.

I am here today to express my opposition of the bills before the Committee today, because these bills threaten to remove even more Constitutional protections than now exist.

As the father of a trans young man, I am deeply troubled by the pervasive lies being told about trans people by right-wing bigots.

They cry out that these people simply don't exist, or shouldn't exist, and if they do exist, they shouldn't have the same rights as "*normal*" people. These bigots feel entitled to bully, mock, and exile these human beings, including *children*.

It is in my lifetime that women and Black people didn't have the same rights as White men. It was only very recently that gay people were granted equal protection. The results of these changes are profound. There are minorities, women, and out gay people at all levels of business, government, and the media. We're not at equity, but their constitutional right to equal protection has been upheld.

The consequences of removing rights have been equally profound and devastating. Jim Crow caused enormous suffering, death, disease, and economic loss. Since Dobbs, women are now dying, some because of sick fetuses festering in their wombs, and disenfranchised children are committing suicide.

Here are some facts:

- The bigots claim to be protecting children, but children are dying because of them. NPR reported that trans children in states that passed anti-transgender laws aimed at minors saw suicide attempts by this population increase by as much as 72% in the following years.ⁱ
- The bigots claim that there are only two genders. The National Academy of Science published a massive study of this issue and the findings are astonishing: At least 1.7% of all infants are born with more than one set of genitals.ⁱⁱ
- And while we were taught in school that females have two X chromosomes and males X and Y, the truth is, nature is far more complicated. This is a fact well-established by genetic and physiological studies.ⁱⁱⁱ

My son struggled physically, emotionally, and socially for years. We, his parents, were so worried about him and we were terrified about surgery! However, after his gender-affirming procedures, he became a new person, someone who finally felt comfortable in his own skin, and the transformation was amazing.

I have one final thought. It's about Maine's future. We know that states that pass anti-trans legislation are losing their children, not only to suicide, but they and their families are moving to other states.^{iv} Can Maine really afford to lose more children? Maine's economic future is in jeopardy because we don't have enough children!^v

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With due process and equal rights being trampled by the federal government, do you really want to be on that side of history?

Thank you for listening.

ⁱ <https://www.npr.org/sections/shots-health-news/2024/09/25/nx-s1-5127347/more-trans-teens-attempted-suicide-after-states-passed-anti-trans-laws-a-study-shows>

ⁱⁱ <https://nap.nationalacademies.org/download/25877>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.kff.org/health-policy-101-lgbtq-health-policy/?entry=table-of-contents-sex-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity>

^{iv} <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-024-01979-5>

^v <https://www.mecep.org/jobs-and-income/state-of-working-maine-2024/>