

Jess Huddy
Waterville
LD 1337

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

Thank you for hearing my voice on these issues today. My name is Jess Huddy — I'm a resident of Waterville, and am writing in strong opposition to LD 1337.

What do we, as a society, have to gain by stripping protections from the Maine Human Rights Act? There is no reason to exempt privately owned shelters from anti-discrimination requirements, and the State of Maine laws are more protective of female athletes than the federal Title IX analysis, especially right now under the current administration.

This change in the law would directly affect women in Maine, and trans women especially. Trans women already face serious barriers to accessing appropriate shelter — not to mention disproportionate risks of violence — when they are unhoused.

Trans students also deserve to have the opportunity to play sports with their peers. Passing this law would reward the federal government's bullying tactics and open the door for further attacks on Mainers' civil rights, but it won't make Maine more safe or fair for anyone.

This change in the law could also have far-reaching effects, allowing people to act out their prejudices — legally — against anyone who doesn't fit their idea of what a woman or a man should be. This also paves the way to remove additional protections on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, etc.

We do not stand to benefit as a society by villainizing people simply because they are different than ourselves. Allowing discrimination in any form is unconscionable and is not something the State of Maine should support. Let us be a state that leads the way to a more empathetic and understanding future.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on LD 1337. Thank you for your time.