

Testimony in opposition of LD 1432 to the Committee On Judiciary

May 8, 2025

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

My name is Sarah Johnson and I reside in Sanford.

I am writing in opposition of LD 1432, An Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identity from the Maine Human Rights Act. With all possible respect for your time and service I ask that you please consider this testimony in opposition to all other discrimination based bills being discussed today as well: LDs 233, 868, 1002, 1134, 1704 1337 and 380.

The title of LD1432 is a call to action to discriminate. Each bill has similar wording. Actively removing protections, considerations, freedoms for ‘some’ people. These bills mandate harm. I have been employed in an almost all male industry for over 40 years, but any ‘discriminatory’ behavior towards me was a speed bump and ended decades ago. I can’t imagine where I would be in life had the veterans of Vietnam and Korea that I worked with on my first job acted towards me the way they felt in the beginning. These men clearly did not want a ‘girl’ in their space. They could have easily ‘removed consideration’ of me in that workplace, harassed and intimidated me. They had the power to cut me out. No one should have this power over another, but that is who we are. They chose to evolve instead of discriminate. That shaped everything about who I am today. None of that compares to the harm these bills being considered will do to our neighbors, but it is how I can explain my perspective. We all personally benefited from our shared knowledge, experience and perspectives, and so our families and communities did as well. Our work on jet engine safety was of higher quality, a benefit that is incalculable.

History clearly shows the devastating effects of discrimination to those who are the targets. These bills are being debated on Victory in Europe Day. History also shows the global devastation discrimination causes.

What are we so afraid of that we would continue the social self-harm practices of discrimination?

We will never know what advancements could have been made, or what issues could have been solved had we appreciated diversity rather than discriminated against it. We can, though, if we choose to evolve.

All Mainers should feel secure in their independence and opportunities for participation and advancement on whatever path they choose.

I hope you will oppose LDs 1432, 233, 868, 1002, 1134, 1704, 1337 and 380.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sarah Johnson, Sanford Maine