

Stephanie Joy
Freeport
LD 1002

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and all esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Dr Stephanie Joy. I live in Freeport. I am a cis woman, a wife, a mother, a pediatrician, and a supporter of ALL children, young adults, and adults in Maine. It is 2025 and the fact that it may be controversial to say that I support all human beings is a sad reflection of where we are in this country. I never thought I would have to choose which of seven bills I wanted to focus on and publicly oppose, and I have struggled for days to decide. Oh, why decide, I oppose them all. LD233, LD 868, LD1002, LD1134, LD1704, LD 1432, and LD380. All of them. I oppose them all. I am electing to focus not on the specifics of how gender non-conforming children will be repressed and endangered by each bill specifically but in general terms in opposition of all the bills. I do not envy the members of this committee the job you have, making critical decisions that affect the lives of people and those who love them, with information coming at you from all sides. We have gotten away from the idea of experts – now, anyone can be an expert if they have a blog, or a website, or a TikTok account with enough followers. In medicine, there are exponential amounts of information coming out all the time and it is impossible to keep up with everything. One of the hardest things I have had to do, especially as a mom and an oldest child, is to admit I don't know everything (please do not tell my kids or younger brother) and I can't know everything. I have had to learn to put my faith and my trust in the people who have studied more and do the work day in and day out.

I went to college for 4 years. Then I went to medical school for 4 years and residency for 3 years before I started working. I put seven years of my life into studying medicine before I worked my first day on the job as a primary care pediatrician in Maine 15 years ago. Using a conservative estimate, I studied medicine for 12,000 hours in medical school, 9,000 hours in residency, and 42,000 hours since then. That is 63,000 hours in the last 22 years. Granted, some of those hours were spent talking to patients about their Halloween costumes or who their favorite Avenger is (the only correct answer is Spiderman and I will not be entertaining discussion on this), but I would still consider myself an expert in the field of medicine, specifically in pediatric medicine. There is no doubt in my mind that acknowledging and supporting children of all gender identities and expressions is best practice from a medical standpoint and frankly, from a human rights standpoint. It is not an exaggeration, as I am sure you will hear from others providing testimony today, to say this is a life or death situation for some of these children and adults.

I firmly believe we all have the same goals, no matter what side of the issue we are on. We all want our children to be safe. We all want our children to be happy. We all want our children to be loved and supported. I urge you to listen to the experts. Listen to (buckle up): the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the American Academy of Dermatology, the American Nurses Association, the American Academy of Physician Assistants, the American Association of Clinical Endocrinology, the American Association of Geriatric Psychiatry, the American College Health Association, the American College of Nurse Midwives, the American College of Physicians, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists, the American Heart Association, the American Counseling Association, the American Medical Student Association, the American Psychiatric and Psychologic Association, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, the American Urological Association, the Endocrine Society, the Journal of the American Medical Association, the National

Association of Social Workers, the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, and even ironically the Texas Medical Association and Texas Pediatric Society, who all support gender-affirming care to children and adults.

These are millions of experts from the societies listed above, people who have literally dedicated their lives to providing evidence-based care to their patients. If you choose to believe that we are all too biased and brainwashed and woke, take a step back. Think of it from a human rights perspective. One of the bills today is LITERALLY proposing to remove a group of human beings from human rights protection. Please, vote ought to not pass for all of these harmful divisive ignorant proposed bills. Thank you for your time.