



**Testimony of Marge Kilkelly on Behalf of
the Maine Council on Aging to the
Judiciary Committee**

In Opposition to LD 1432
An Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identity
from the Maine Human Rights Act

Submitted May 8, 2025

Thank you Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Members of the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Marge Kilkelly, and I am a Policy Consultant for the Maine Council on Aging (MCOA) which is a broad, multidisciplinary network of over 140 organizations, businesses, municipalities, and older community members working to ensure we can all live healthy, engaged, and secure lives with choices and opportunities as we age at home and in community settings. The MCOA is a unifying force across sectors that is creating a new narrative about aging and older people in Maine with the goal of building local, statewide, and national support for the systemic changes needed to support our new longevity.

I am testifying in Opposition to LD 1432 An Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identity from the Maine Human Rights Act.

Governments have a responsibility to ensure that the human rights of all people are protected. Human rights belong to every human. Every human of color, every age, every gender identity, every faith; every human. To remove select human rights from law is to deny some humans protection from abuse and harassment, access to housing and healthcare, the ability to receive an education or be employed.

We are all aging. Aging creates opportunities and challenges. The challenges facing LGBTQ older people are unique. According to the National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA), one study of lesbian, gay, or bisexual adults over age 60 found that 65% had been victimized due to their sexual orientation. Reports included verbal abuse, threats of violence, physical assault, sexual assault, and discrimination. LGBTQ individuals have also experienced a lifetime of stigma, uninformed care in healthcare, and legal discrimination.

Transgender and gender-diverse older people have experienced discrimination, non-affirmation of their gender, and stigma throughout their life. Aging transgender people may delay preventative and other healthcare and be extremely concerned about needing long term care.

LGBTQ older adults fear the repercussions of non-inclusive anti-discrimination laws. Their concerns are not unfounded. In 2022, a 79-year-old Maine trans woman was refused admission to an assisted living facility because of her gender identity. The Maine Human Rights Commission found evidence of discrimination and ruled in favor of King. (King v. Sunrise Assisted Living, settlement reached 6/13/22)

I urge you to oppose LD 1432 and have Maine law continue to protect the human rights of all people.