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LD 233

Distinguished Committee Members I am here today to voice my opposition to LD233 An Act to Prohibit Biological Males from Participating in School Athletic Programs. I am a retired teacher and have worked in the secondary school systems for 20 years. Over those 20 years I have worked with many trans gender students. In 2014 when the Maine State Supreme Court decided in favor of Nicole Maines right to use the bathroom of the gender she identified with in a public school I saw a tremendous positive change in student attitudes and safety within the school system.

This bill is dangerous on two fronts. One -The focus is so much on not allowing biological males to participate in school athletics. There is a basic misconception at play here. The athletes being targeted by this bill are not biological males - they are transgender females. A male cannot just show up at a female school sport dressed as a female and be able to play on that team. A transgender female must go through a whole process to be able to compete. The Maine Principals Association has had a whole process in place to determine if a student should play on the team of the gender they identify with. I'd like to point out that transgender males go through the same process. Two - This bill and the others before the committee today create far more harm than any protections they will deliver. They negate and dismiss an entire group of people - attempting to erase and pretend trans people do not exist. I find that very disheartening.

I have people very close to me who are transgender or allies who were afraid to testify today for fear of being put on a list and targeted. This body has time and again stood up for the rights of all Mainers including transgender people - from rejecting bathroom bills to rejecting another anti trans athlete bill several years ago. I am asking you to keep that tradition alive and reject LD 233. thank you for the opportunity to speak