

Testimony in Opposition to LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002 and LD 1134

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Chairpersons, Members of the Committee:

My name is Katherine Marble, and I am a resident of Temple and a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who has practiced in Maine for 18 years. I am writing to express my strong opposition to LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002 and LD 1134. These proposed bills represent a deeply harmful attempt to ban transgender youth from participating in activities with their peers in ways that align with their gender identity and from participating in a safe school environment.

Let me be clear: these bills are not only morally and ethically wrong—they also violate existing Maine Human Rights law. Maine has long recognized that discrimination based on gender identity is illegal. These proposals seek to unravel those protections, not based on evidence or community need, but on fear-driven, politically motivated narratives that harm our most vulnerable youth.

It is essential to recognize the real-life consequences of these measures. Their enactment would send a dangerous message to transgender children—that they are not welcome, that they are fundamentally different, and that their mere presence is a threat. This message is not only false; it is deeply damaging. There is no credible data to support the claim that transgender youth in school sports or gender-aligned facilities pose a risk to others. On the contrary, the data is overwhelmingly clear that transgender youth face significantly increased risks of bullying, isolation, depression, and suicide when they are denied the right to be themselves.

These bills are not protecting children—they are targeting them. And we must remember: we are talking about children. Young people who are still developing their sense of identity, community, and belonging. They deserve our support, not our rejection.

As a mental health professional, I have seen firsthand the emotional and psychological toll that rejection, marginalization, and exclusion have on youth. Schools should be safe, inclusive environments where every child can learn, grow, and thrive. Creating laws that single out and exclude transgender students does the opposite—it makes schools less safe and less supportive for everyone.

I urge this committee to reject these harmful bills and to instead uphold the values that Maine has long stood for: dignity, equality, and compassion.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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