

Todd McKinley
Arundel
LD 1337

To the Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed legislative acts listed for public hearing on May 8, 2025, specifically LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, LD 1704, LD 1337, LD 1432, and LD 380. These bills, individually and collectively, represent a grave threat to the rights, safety, and well-being of transgender and gender-diverse individuals in our state, and I urge you to reject them.

These proposed acts are rooted in harmful misconceptions and seek to legislate discrimination under the guise of addressing nonexistent problems.

LD 1337, "An Act to Amend the Maine Human Rights Act Regarding Female Athletes and Safety in Women's Single-sex Shelters," creates exemptions in the Maine Human Rights Act that allow discrimination against transgender women. This undermines protections in both emergency housing and educational equity and exploits unfounded fears about safety to justify exclusion. Transgender women face higher rates of violence and homelessness, and excluding them from shelters puts them in greater danger. Many shelters nationwide already include transgender clients without incident. Title IX and the Maine Human Rights Act exist to protect all women, including transgender women. Creating legal loopholes for discrimination sets a dangerous precedent. We do not have to choose between safety and inclusion; we can and must ensure both.

LD 1432, "An Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identity from the Maine Human Rights Act," would strip away legal protections for transgender and nonbinary individuals in all areas of public life. This encourages discrimination in schools, workplaces, housing, and public accommodations and targets a population already vulnerable to exclusion and harm. The Maine Human Rights Act protects everyone, and removing gender identity undermines its purpose. Transgender people face high rates of violence, job loss, and housing insecurity. Removing these protections sends a message that transgender people do not deserve dignity or equality. Courts and national legal standards increasingly affirm that gender identity is protected under anti-discrimination laws. Maine should be a leader in inclusion and civil rights, not a state that erases protections.

In conclusion, these proposed acts are discriminatory, harmful, and unnecessary. They are based on fear and misunderstanding rather than facts and compassion. More importantly, these bills do not represent the values and will of the people of Maine; these bills stem from a carefully orchestrated attack on civil liberties by a nationwide political action committee feeding package language to local representatives. I implore the Judiciary Committee to recognize the profound negative impact these bills would have on transgender and gender-diverse individuals in Maine and to vote against their passage. Let Maine remain a state that values equality, inclusion, and the fundamental rights of all its residents.