

Jess Mizzi
Portland
LD 1704

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Portland, Maine
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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to address this committee. My name is Jess Mizzi and I am a resident of Portland. I am here as someone that has friends and loved ones who are trans, and as someone who wants to do my part in making Maine schools and the larger Maine community a safe place for trans youth and folks to be. I am here in opposition to the bills before the committee today. This includes LD 233; LD 868; LD 1002; LD 1134; LD 1704; LD 1337; LD 1432; and LD 380.

These bills seek to walk back the work that has already been done here in Maine to ensure that all young people have the freedom to be themselves, to be safe, and to be protected at school. The Maine Human Rights Act adopted protections for gender identity back in 2005. These bills ask the Maine people to roll back twenty years of protections to put trans youth at greater risk. According to The Trevor Project's 2024 U.S. National Survey on the Mental Health of LGBTQ+ Young People, 46% of transgender and nonbinary young people reported they seriously considered attempting suicide in the last year. That same study shared that more than half (54%) of transgender and nonbinary young people found their school to be gender-affirming, and those who did reported lower rates of attempting suicide. Protecting young people by ensuring they can come to school as themselves, feel empowered to be a part of their community by joining sports teams, and know the leaders of their state, you all in this committee, believe in them is not an issue about beliefs. This is a life or death issue. Voting anything on any of these bills besides "ought not to pass" ignores the staggering statistics about what the kinds of environments these bills wish to create will do to the mental wellbeing of our state's youth. Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote "Ought not to Pass" on these bills. Thank you.