

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY CYNTHIA MONTELEONE

**Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary
LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms,
Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and
Postsecondary Schools**

May 8, 2025

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Cynthia Monteleone, and I am a world champion track athlete specializing in the 400-meter race. I am also the mother of a high school track athlete who, like me, has experienced the devastating impact of unfair competition in women's sports. I am writing to urge you to support LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools.

In 2018, I competed at the World Masters Athletics Championships in Málaga, Spain, where I raced against a male athlete from Colombia. I was fortunate to win that race by just a few tenths of a second, securing my place in the final round. But at the 2019 World Championship indoor meet in Poland, the male athlete won silver in the 80-meter hurdles, beating my teammate, who trained harder than anyone I know in the hurdles.

When I expressed concerns about the fairness of allowing males to compete in women's events, I was met with hostility. USA Track and Field officials told me, "For your own safety, you might want to keep your mouth shut."

Then, my teenage daughter, Margaret, raced a male athlete who had just switched from the boys to the girls volleyball and track teams, injuring a volleyball player and beating my daughter after only 2 weeks practice.

Women's sports exist for a reason: to provide female athletes with a level playing field. Allowing males to compete in women's events disregards the physical differences that impact performance, such as lung capacity, muscle mass, and overall strength. These advantages remain, even after hormone therapy. The reality is that when males are allowed to compete in women's sports, female athletes are the ones who lose.

Athletes like my daughter and my teammate should not have to wonder whether their years of training will be rendered meaningless. I refuse to be

silent, and I refuse to let my daughter's generation lose what women have fought so hard to gain.

I urge this committee to pass LD 868 and take a stand for fairness, safety, and equal opportunity in women's sports.

Thank you,

Cynthia Montelone
Ambassador
Independent Women