

Heather Newton Brown
Casco, Maine
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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee. I am lifetime resident of Maine, currently residing in Casco, and I am a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor providing psychotherapy and clinical supervision. I contract with several school districts in the state to consult with their mental health departments. Additionally, I am active as a volunteer in the community. I stand in opposition of the bills being introduced, specifically: [LD 233](#), [LD 868](#), [LD 1002](#), [LD 1134](#), [LD 1704](#), [LD 1337](#), [LD 1432](#), [LD 380](#).

As a mental health provider and a previous school employee, I know that these bills would leave ALL girls vulnerable to scrutiny and harassment. These bans would invite any person to call for an invasive or traumatizing “gender check” on any girl who wants to play sports if they think she is “too tall” or “too strong.” They codify rigid and narrow standards of femininity and embolden those who seek to bully and harass girls that do not meet those expectations. This puts girls of color and gender non-conforming girls at a significant risk. Furthermore, these bans create a burden of enforcement for schools, a dilemma at best, as attempts to enforce bans blatantly violate the privacy of all Maine women and girls. Girls disproportionately experience fear of harassment due to their gender, and this increases the experience of anxiety and fear due to a hostile and disapproving environment.

Gender affirmation is suicide prevention. Trans girls are girls. If the goal is to protect girls, and to protect girls in sports, then we must consider their mental health and the overall wellbeing of ALL girls, not just the girls that some have deemed worthy.

I urge you to reject this harmful legislation that would set a dangerous precedent for adherence to gender constructs that we know are outdated and defy modern scientific understanding of complex gender biology. Please vote “ought not to pass”.

Thank you for your time,

Heather Newton Brown
Casco, Maine