

Gabriel Robertson
Portland
LD 1704

Subject: Opposition to Bills Restricting Transgender Students' Rights

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am writing as a concerned resident of Maine to express strong opposition to LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, and LD 1704. These bills would severely restrict the rights and well-being of transgender students in our public schools.

I have a young cousin, born and raised in southern Maine, who will soon turn three. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, most children begin to develop a stable sense of their gender identity between the ages of 2 and 4. See: www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/Pages/Gender-Identity-and-Gender-Confusion-In-Children.aspx.

Some of these children—including my cousin and peers in daycare—will grow up to tell us they are cisgender. Some will grow up to tell us they are transgender. All deserve the chance to be themselves and to be safe, supported, and included.

I want my cousin and all Maine children to grow up in schools where they are called by affirming names, welcomed in sports, and able to use restrooms without fear. These bills would do the opposite—sending a message that some children don't belong. According to the National Education Association, affirming school environments are essential to student mental health, safety, and academic success. See: www.nea.org/resource-library/importance-affirming-transgender-students.

Please reject these discriminatory bills and help ensure Maine schools are safe for every child.

Sincerely,
Gabriel Robertson
Portland, ME