

Francine Rudoff  
Litchfield, 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 resident of Litchfield. I am writing today in opposition to LD 1432, LD 380, LD 1337, LD 1704, LD 1134, LD 1002, LD 868, and LD 233.

As a parent of a (now grown-up) competitive athlete, I witnessed countless hours of practices and games across multiple sports throughout Central Maine. I saw young people of all shapes and sizes and genders doing their best to compete and learn all the important lessons that sports afford – teamwork, perseverance, and dedication. I learned firsthand through those experiences about the dedication and hard work that local athletic directors and coaches provide to our children, our teams and our communities. There is no doubt in my mind that these professionals, along with parents and their children, are in the best position to make decisions about participation in various sports. THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO “ONE SIZE FITS ALL” when it comes to these matters. EVERY child, regardless of gender identity, should be afforded the opportunity to participate in sports and other extracurricular activities. Maine’s Human Rights Act and the policies adopted by organizations that govern youth athletics (such as rules about who can participate in different sports at different levels) have been working. Leave these decisions to the people who are in the best position to make them.

I am also a retired Executive Director of youth civic engagement and arts institutions. Over several decades, I have worked closely with youth and adults of all ages and genders and have learned a great deal about the challenges and barriers faced by people who do not conform to our inhumane notions of rigid male/female categories. Along with so many other organizations and institutions, we have come a long way in changing and improving policies and facilities to create safer and more inclusive environments for all. Protections afforded by the Maine Human Rights Act, especially in light of current bullying and attacks from federal officials and agencies, is more important than ever. Please don’t turn back the clock.

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!