

Sarah Shepro
Portland
LD 1432

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee.

My name is Sarah Shepro, I'm a resident of Portland. I'm here to strongly oppose LD1432, and the other anti-trans bills being heard by the committee today. These bills are nothing more than an unjustified attempt to systematically erase trans people.

Not only is there no justification for removing gender identity as a protected status from the Maine Human Rights Act, but it's cruel to knowingly open the door to discrimination against transgender people

This bill would punish, erase, and harm people who aren't cisgender men and women - it's designed to push them out of sight. I want the committee to know that trans, nonbinary, and gender-fluid people have existed as long as people have been alive, and they will continue to exist despite legislation like LD1432.

The Maine Human Rights Act adopted protections for gender identity in 2005. Those protections have now existed for 20 years. Again, I wonder why we need to remove the terms "gender identity" from the Act. Supporters of this bill may state their reasoning as being that trans women are "taking opportunities" from cisgender women. In my opinion, if our concern is opportunities for women, we're looking in the wrong place. We don't need to pit women, and by women I mean all women, against each other to fight for limited opportunities. Rather, we need to fight for truly equitable opportunities for all women. Many women are still experiencing discrimination based on their gender and other identities.

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!