

Finn Teach
Portland, Maine
May 2, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Finn Teach, and I live in Portland. **I am writing in strong opposition to LD 1337: *An Act to Amend the Maine Human Rights Act Regarding Female Athletes and Safety in Women's Single-sex Shelters*.**

This bill is one of the most alarming attempts yet to roll back the basic civil rights of transgender people in Maine. It would create exemptions in the Maine Human Rights Act—one of our state's proudest accomplishments—for privately owned emergency shelters and potentially for a broad array of sports settings. It is dangerous, discriminatory, and entirely unnecessary.

I am a transgender person. I am also someone who believes deeply in fairness, safety, and dignity for *all* people. That is exactly why I oppose this bill. LD 1337 would not keep anyone safer—it would actively put people in harm's way, especially trans women who are unhoused or fleeing domestic violence. These are women who already face disproportionate levels of abuse, sexual assault, and discrimination. Turning them away from shelter because of who they are is not only cruel—it's life-threatening.

Let's be clear: shelters in Maine already know how to keep all women safe. They have been doing so for years—without this bill, and without blanket bans. They assess safety based on behavior, not identity. LD 1337 would override that professional discretion and force shelters to make decisions based on outdated stereotypes and fear rather than facts and expertise.

This bill would also align the Maine Human Rights Act with recent Title IX proposals that are part of a broader national effort to restrict the rights of transgender athletes and women. But here in Maine, we have our own laws, and we have consistently chosen inclusion. Maine added gender identity protections to the Human Rights Act nearly 20 years ago. Undoing those protections now would send a chilling message: that trans people are not equal under the law.

If this bill passes, it will not stop with shelters or sports. It opens the door to broader rollbacks of protections for LGBTQ Mainers, people of color, immigrants, and others. It invites chaos and confusion by undermining one of the most clear and consistent civil rights laws in the country.

And for what? There is no crisis here. There is no widespread problem of trans women harming others in shelters or dominating sports. The crisis is not who is *included*—the crisis is who is being *excluded*, and what happens to them when they are.

Trans people in Maine deserve safety, dignity, and access to basic services—just like everyone else. LD 1337 would strip away those rights and increase vulnerability for the very people most in need of protection.

I urge you to vote no on this bill. Uphold the Maine Human Rights Act. Trust the professionals who are already doing this work. And send a clear message that Maine will not abandon its values of fairness and inclusion.

Thank you.

Finn Teach