

Valerie Todd
Portland Friends Meeting
LD 1432

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

Thank you for the opportunity to share my story with you. My name is Valerie Todd, I'm a resident of Portland, and I'm here as a lifelong Christian, a mother, and a Mainer.

As a Christian, I am inspired by the Genesis story of creation. Just as God created day and night, He also created dawn and dusk, in-between times that are especially beautiful. Just as God created the land and the waters, He also created beaches, in-between places that are especially beautiful. Similarly, God created male and female, and people across a gender spectrum. We are all made in God's image, and my faith compels me to speak out when vulnerable people are being targeted and harmed.

As a mother of children in Maine schools, I want my children - and all children in Maine - to grow up with the Maine Human Rights Act in full force, protecting everyone. Data from around the country shows that some people are using trans rights as a weapon to further the agenda to roll back the civil rights of LGBTQ people and women, among others. "We the people" in our Constitution needs to mean all of us, not just some of us.

As a Mainer, I believe we can be leaders in standing up for our state's right to make our own laws, and not bow to the national political agenda. We have state guarantees of equal protection, and Title IX prohibits sex discrimination. Passing these laws rewards the federal government's bullying tactics and opens the door to further attacks on Mainers' civil rights. It won't make Maine more safe or fair for anyone.

Thank you for being courageous in defending the civil rights of all Mainers. I urge you to vote "Ought not to pass" on these bills. Thank you.