

Jen Waterman
Yarmouth
LD 1134

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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 a resident of Yarmouth and am also writing from my professional opinion as a licensed Maine therapist. I am writing today in opposition to bills before the committee on May 8, 2025. The bills specifically I strongly urge you to oppose are: LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, LD 1704, LD 1337, LD 1432, LD 380.

In my practice as a therapist for over 30 years, I have treated many young people (and adults) around issues of gender identity. This is a struggle that takes courage and is painful - even in the privacy of a trusted therapist's office. These issues run so deep that many consider not living to be easier than risking revealing who they are. We must do everything as a community, school system, social service provider, healthcare system and government to support and protect the human rights of these courageous people. We need to protect the most vulnerable among us and support them in thriving. When we raise up one of us, we all rise.

These bills will hurt all girls, our schools and female athletes everywhere. The proposed bans will encourage more hateful harassment of children by adults based on what their bodies look like. The bans would condone traumatizing girls with "gender checks" which not only violates their privacy but also discourages strength building and restricts strength to a limited feminized image. These bans are discriminating to all female athletes.

LD 380 is of particular concern as a health care provider. There are already so many barriers to kids receiving gender-affirming care including counseling. It is crucial that young people's human right to body autonomy is supported and respected. They need information and safe, trustworthy healthcare providers to help them make informed decisions for themselves.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective. I strongly urge you to vote "Ought NOT to pass" on these bills: LD 233, LD 868, LD 1002, LD 1134, LD 1704, LD 1337, LD 1432, LD 380.

Thank you.
Jennifer Waterman