

Karen Wyman
Hallowell
LD 1432

Testimony of Karen Wyman
Hallowell, ME
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Opposing LD 1432: An Act to Remove Consideration of Gender Identity from the
Maine Human Rights Act

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Karen Wyman, and I live in Hallowell. I am writing to share my strong opposition to LD 1432 which would remove all references to “gender identity” as a protected class in the Maine Human Rights Act.

This language was adopted 20 years in 2005 - twenty years of two extra words that provide extra security and confidence to Mainers among the most vulnerable to possible Human Rights abuses and violations. I grew up in Damariscotta, the daughter of parents who both held local elected office and who taught me to be proud of my identity as a Mainer. They believed in the fair-minded values they saw in their neighbors and leaders as core to Maine’s political and governmental systems. I believed them, and I continue to believe in the promise of Maine as a place where we believe in respect and fairness. Period. I was raised to speak up when I see something wrong, unethical, and discriminatory happening, and I’m proud that my state shares that commitment. There is no reason to shrink from that commitment now.

Some will argue that “gender identity” is included under sex and/or sexual orientation, and if this bill is successful, I hope they are right. Why take the chance? Why not have a broad and expansive understanding of who deserves protection under the Maine Human Rights Act as we have for the past twenty years? There is no reason to omit “gender identity” from the Maine Human Rights Act.

Thank you for considering my perspective, and I urge you to vote no on LD 1432.

Sincerely,
Karen Wyman