

Milja Brecher-DeMuro
Bar Harbor, ME
LD 2239

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

My name is Milja Brecher-DeMuro and I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, living and working in Bar Harbor, ME.

I am opposed to the proposed ballot measure, LD 2239.

Our state laws must protect freedom and fairness: We cannot open the door to laws and government policing or controlling our bodies. This proposal would repeal our foundational Maine Human Rights Act and leave Mainers with fewer civil rights protections.

As a Clinical Social Worker and working for 14 years in private practice I have seen the emotional, mental and physical harm that is inflicted upon those who are transgender not being treated and accepted as they see themselves. To not honor the gender in which an individual identifies themselves as is denying them who they are at their core. We see the drastic increase in the numbers of mental health disorders, depression, anxiety, self-harm and suicide in those not supported in their identification. These bills are rooted in fear and not fact. The amount of trauma that a transgender child experiences when forced to not engage in the activities that bring them joy, forced to use a bathroom/locker room for the gender they do not identify is detrimental to their well-being and has lifelong impacts. Children should be given all the freedom we can to explore who they are in this world with support and encouragement. The numbers don't lie, when we offer this type of love, support and freedom, children thrive. All children thrive. Limiting these opportunities, policing genitalia is a horrible idea and extremely violating, only to bring harm to ALL. All children deserve to be believed and supported as whomever they know themselves to be.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee.

Sincerely,

Milja Brecher-DeMuro, LCSW