

Whitney Bushey
Portland, ME
April 14, 2026

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

My name is Whitney Bushey, and I am a lifelong Mainer and female athlete.

Back when I was a student at Messalonskee High School, I played soccer, swam for the swim team, was MVP for my senior cross-country team, and earned a varsity letter in track and field.

Competitive women's sports have always been a part of my life, and as an adult, I am a rostered member of the Maine Roller Derby Travel Team. I have been playing this full-contact sport since 2016, and participated in two international tournaments.

I am writing to you today in full opposition to the proposed ballot measure, LD 2239.

I have had the pleasure to play both alongside and against many transgender and non-binary athletes in the past nine years, and not once have I felt unsafe or unfairly outcompeted. If anything, I am the one who has inflicted more injuries than I have received in our extremely physical sport.

Women's roller derby has always been a space where we celebrate strength, grit, and determination. In 2008, the Women's Flat Track Roller Derby Association (WFTDA) concluded that it needed to take an official position with regard to transgender skaters in competition. Several years of research and discussion followed, and the WFTDA consulted medical professionals, academics, attorneys, and organizations - including the U.S. Olympic Committee.

In March 2011, WFTDA members voted to include transgender athletes in women's leagues.

Since then, the WFTDA and individual leagues have gone beyond that initial policy. MRD's bylaws include this gender policy:

“Skating Members must 1) identify as female, non-binary, or gender expansive; or 2) feel most comfortable skating with a women's roller derby league.”

Transgender athletes, like all athletes, bring their unique energy to the track—and that makes the game richer, more diverse, and more exciting. They have every right to take part in sports, to compete, to be celebrated for their skills, passion, and contribution to our community. They have every right to win without facing harassment. Women's sports are at their best when all women are included. Ciswomen athletes in Maine do not need protection from our friends and teammates.

LD 2239 is an extreme blanket measure ban based on an ideology of hate, and it dares to presume women's weakness. It does not allow Maine communities or individual Maine sports leagues to self-determine policies that work for them.

It does not address the true threats to women's sports, including a lack of funding in rural schools, unequal access to facilities, and limited opportunities for advancement.

Additionally, the enforcement of this policy may open the door for adults to be litigating and verifying the private physical characteristics of minors who may not look "feminine" or "masculine" enough. All so they can play a recreational school sport with their friends.

LD 2239 also violates the spirit of Maine's existing anti-discrimination laws. I find it deeply revolting that an out-of-state billionaire paid petition gatherers to flood our state and attempt to attack our most vulnerable youth athletes under the weak disguise of "Protecting Women's Sports". Women all know who the biggest predators are, and it's not our trans kids.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Whitney Bushey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Whitney Bushey

Whitney Bushey
Portland, ME, Maine Roller Derby
LD 2239

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