



Testimony in opposition to:
LD 2239, An Act to Designate School Sports Participation and Facilities by Sex

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

I am writing to you today on behalf of OUT Maine in opposition to LD 2239, An Act to Designate School Sports Participation and Facilities by Sex.

For 30 years, OUT Maine has served LGBTQ+ youth and families across the state. We have seen firsthand how important it is to ensure that all children have safe spaces where they can be themselves, be supported and loved in their communities; at home, at school, and out in the world. This bill targets an already marginalized group of young people, singling them out, and sending a dangerous message to LGBTQ+ youth and adults alike - if you don't fit within a certain box, then you don't matter. We reject that kind of thinking. We know there is a better path and better example that we can set for our children.

This proposal is not homegrown. It is part of a coordinated out-of-state campaign to roll back the rights of transgender people across the country, and Maine's children are being used as the vehicle. Our communities deserve better than imported division.

The majority of Mainers agree that transgender youth are not a threat. They are kids who want to go to school, play sports with their friends, and grow up without fear. The harms of exclusion, however, are well documented by elevated rates of depression, anxiety, and suicidality among LGBTQ+ youth who lack support and belonging.

Maine's energy and resources should be spent addressing the real challenges our families face - underfunded schools, lack of affordable housing, a shortage of mental health supports, and making life more affordable for Mainers.

We strongly oppose this bill and encourage all Mainers to stand up for what is right and protect all of Maine's children, not single any of them out.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan B Campbell
Executive Director