

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and members of the Committee on Judiciary, my name is Scott Cuddy and I live in Winterport. I am testifying in opposition to LD 2239 An Act to Designate School Sports Participation and Facilities by Sex.

I want to start by saying that I'm deeply saddened by the existence of this legislation. Those who have created this bill and financed the effort to gather the signatures are, in my opinion, doing it for the most cynical of reasons. I think they believe that this culture war issue will assist them electorally. I don't believe they really care about girls in sports, and I don't think for one second that they care about the lives of trans kids.

The lack of empathy for others in the strategy behind this bill is stunning. I hope all of you on the committee take a few minutes and try to put yourselves in the shoes of a young person who looks in the mirror and doesn't agree with what they see. Maybe that sentence doesn't make sense to you. What does that mean, "doesn't agree with what they see"? If that doesn't make sense to you as an adult reading it, imagine how confusing the situation is to a young person living it every moment of every day. Imagine being trapped in a body that feels wrong.

I know I don't know what that feels like, but I know what it feels like to be trapped in situations I don't like. But I can extricate myself from those situations. I don't wake up every morning in them. I don't walk around all day in them. But because I have empathy for others, I can extrapolate how it must feel to be in that body. To look at myself and believe that it's wrong. Maybe even that I'm wrong. I'm sure that is a big part of why the CDC tells us that 80% of trans kids contemplate suicide and 40% of them actually attempt it. I'm also sure that pieces of legislation like this, and the sentiment that got someone to actually craft this bill, are part of those numbers, too.

Now we want to take an outlet that some of those kids might want to avail themselves of, sports, and put it off-limits. Being a part of a team is a huge thing in high school. If a trans kid can find some acceptance in sports to offset the immense bigotry they might face in the classroom, in the lunch room, and out on the street, they should be able to participate.

Proponents talk about girls losing opportunities because another athlete was assigned male at birth and is now participating on a girls team. Better to have that young person ostracized? Better to have the athlete who was assigned female at birth get to go from 5th place to 4th while the trans youth contemplates killing themselves? That's literally the choice.

This bill is an abomination. It comes from the closed mind of a bigot. I hope that this bill gets a unanimous ought not to pass recommendation from this committee and goes no further.