

Heather MacNeil  
Yarmouth  
LD 2239

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

My name is Heather MacNeil, I'm a resident of Yarmouth, and I am here as an individual member of my community. I am opposed to the proposed ballot measure, LD 2239.

As a Mainer, I care deeply about the well-being of our students and the strength of our communities. This proposal feels like an extreme, blanket policy that does not reflect the realities of Maine's schools or the values of our towns. Its vague and poorly defined language creates a "one-size-fits-all" approach that risks confusion and inconsistency across districts. Rather than creating clarity, it would likely introduce disruption—placing administrators, teachers, and students in difficult and uncertain situations.

I am especially concerned about the practical burden this measure would place on schools that are already stretched thin. Instead of focusing on education, support services, and student development, schools could be forced to divert time and resources into enforcing unclear requirements—potentially including invasive processes like verifying students' personal documents for everyday activities. This would not only be costly but could create unnecessary stress and distraction for students trying to learn and feel safe in their environment.

Maine's schools face real challenges that deserve our attention—such as unequal funding, disparities in access to facilities, and ensuring all students have opportunities to participate and thrive. Those are the areas where our limited resources should be directed. This measure risks pulling focus away from those priorities and instead introducing new administrative and legal complications, including the potential for increased litigation.

I also believe strongly that our laws should protect both freedom and fairness. Measures that open the door to government overreach into personal matters set a troubling precedent. The potential rollback of protections under the Maine Human Rights Act is especially concerning, as it could leave many Mainers with fewer civil rights safeguards than they currently have.

Finally, it is troubling to see a proposal of this magnitude driven by funding from outside our state. Maine has a long tradition of local decision-making and community-driven values. Policies that impact our children and our schools should come from thoughtful, in-state dialogue—not outside influence.

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