

My name is Margaret Merritt and I reside in Hallowell. I identify as a lesbian... -

My name is Margaret Merritt and I reside in Hallowell. I identify as a lesbian and have many many queer and trans friends. I work in politics with a focus on fundraising for candidates that focus on popular economic issues, and I have previously worked with youth through Just ME for Just US. I am testifying about LD 2239, a proposal that would separate school sports by sex.

1. Trans people in sports is framed as a massive issue, but that doesn't match the facts. Per a study published in [Front Sports Act Living](#), there is no direct connection between sex and athletic performance and only 0.5% to 2% of the population identify as trans. Per the [NFHS and Dr. Glenn Lungarini](#), Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) executive director, there's no evidence of trans athletes having an unfair advantage over cis athletes and no impact on school sports as a source of connection and team building. Finally, [GLAAD](#) reported that 61% of non-LGBTQ adults were accepting of the community and that 79% believed schools should be accepting spaces for queer youth.

Oberlin DJ. Sex differences and athletic performance. Where do trans individuals fit into sports and athletics based on current research? *Front Sports Act Living*. 2023 Oct 27;5:1224476. doi: 10.3389/fspor.2023.1224476. PMID: 37964771; PMCID: PMC10641525.

<https://nfhs.org/stories/transgender-athletes-participation-equity-and-competition>

<https://glaad.org/accelerating-acceptance-2025/>

2. Per the [National Council on Family Relations](#), community acceptance, such as in public schools, significantly lowers the rate of depression and suicide in queer and trans youth.

<https://www.ncfr.org/news/critical-benefits-familial-and-community-support-transgender-youth>

3. Injury, an often cited a reason for sex separation in sports, can be solved in more practical and less exclusionary ways, such as ensuring proper supervision

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and good equipment, as well as cross-training and warm-ups, per [Johns Hopkins](#).

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/sports-injuries/10-tips-for-preventing-sports-injuries-in-kids-and-teens>

4. According to [RAINN](#), most child sexual abuse is done by an adult of 30 or more, often a man, who knew the child. Many of these policies rest on the idea that trans people are an inherent threat to children, but a trans classmate is extremely unlikely to harm a child, compared to a family friend, family member, or adult with authority over the child.

<https://rainn.org/facts-statistics-the-scope-of-the-problem/statistics-perpetrators-of-sexual-violence/>

5. In 2025, The [Maine Morning Star](#) reported that Maine public schools had the lowest score in three decades on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) which focuses on reading and math scores. Also in 2025, [Maine Public](#) reported that barely any schools received funding from the Maine Department of Education for necessary projects.

<https://mainemorningstar.com/2025/01/29/maine-students-score-lowest-in-three-decades-on-nations-report-card/>

<https://www.mainepublic.org/education-news/2025-11-21/only-2-of-the-nearly-100-schools-on-the-states-construction-list-will-receive-funding>

6. In my personal experience as a queer person who has queer and trans friends, who has been a community member, and who realized their identity before exposure to the queer community, the support we seek does not threaten anyone, especially when we are talking about a child, and exposure or lack thereof does not change a person's identity. The idea that queer people in general and trans people in particular are a threat of any kind is cruel and pseudo-scientific at best.

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7. LD 2239 addresses an issue that does not exist and would potentially harm trans children while offering no clear protection to cis children. Statistical fact and personal experience does not back this proposed legislation up as beneficial, and public opinion is not in favor of discriminatory practices in schools. Proposals like LD 2239 also distract from serious issues that must be addressed with policy, like declining education quality and insufficient funding, such as for proper sports equipment. Thank you for your time.

Margaret Merritt
Hallowell, Maine
LD 2239