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Lamoine, Maine  
April 13, 2026

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

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Dawn Nuding. I'm a resident of Lamoine and I am submitting testimony on behalf of myself and my colleagues at The Counseling Collaborative in Bar Harbor. I am opposed to the proposed ballot measure, LD 2239.

For the past thirteen years I have worked in private practice as a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and Art Therapist, primarily with school aged youth and families. My caseload has included many people who are transgender and who identify as non-binary and gender fluid. As a professional in the field, I know that the mental health of marginalized communities is statistically more at risk for higher rates of depression, anxiety and suicidal thinking, and I have certainly seen evidence of that in the clients I work with. I have also seen how affirming spaces, inclusion in community activities like sports and access to safe, affirming healthcare can increase resiliency exponentially. This resiliency is what strengthens the mental wellness of all populations and in turn strengthens us as a State. I believe our State's energy and tax dollars would be much better spent increasing safe and equitable access to resources for all students rather than limiting them further.

As part of our community, trans people deserve access to those basic resources. We have many essential safeguards to protect human rights in our state and our country including constitutional guarantees of equal protection, Title IX and the Maine Human Rights Act. Undoing or undermining those safeguards with a measure like LD 2239 would be a step backwards in the fundamental rights of our state. I particularly worry that measures like this suggest they will improve the protection of vulnerable populations like children and female athletes, when they are actually exploiting these populations and pitting them against each other to promote discriminatory and bigoted political views.

Banning access to resources or limiting the rights and protections of anyone in our community will cause widespread harm to the entire population. Our goal should be to move forward as a state, rather than backward. Thank you so much for your work and for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee.

Dawn Nuding