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### Public Testimony: Ballot Measure LD 2239

I would like to begin by thanking the Chairs Senator Carney and Representative Kuhn, along with the rest of the members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Aspen Ruhlin, and I am speaking here today on behalf of Mabel Wadsworth Center. Mabel's is an independent feminist sexual and reproductive health center that has been providing care in Bangor since 1984. We are the only feminist health center in Maine, and one of only a handful in the country. Women have and always will be at the forefront of our mission. In all areas of our work, we seek to honor women's lives, trans and cis alike. We are privileged to stand with and for all women. As an organization that is well-known and held in high regard not only for the quality of care we provide but for our feminist values, we submit this testimony today in strong opposition to ballot measure LD 2239.

Speaking both as an expert and as a former Maine high school athlete, I can say with confidence that this ballot measure has been presented in bad faith and, contrary to the language they may use, seeks to harm Maine women and girls. The idea that those assigned male at birth have an inherent advantage in athletics over those assigned female at birth is a misogynistic trope. Sexual dimorphism is minimal in humans; we are not birds.

There are certainly inequities in sports and threats that cisgender girls in Maine's schools face, but neither lie at the feet of including transgender girls and honoring them for who they know themselves to be. Rather than address the real issues of inequitable funding, unequal access to facilities, or the sexual harassment faced by girls, cis and trans alike, in our schools, this ballot measure seeks to control women and girls at the behest of an out-of-state billionaire. Will this bill mandate that all high school girls have to carry around a copy of their birth certificate in order to use the restroom, or just the ones that are tall, have short hair, or otherwise don't adhere to a narrow notion of femininity?

Trans people have always been here. Their presence in sports, in locker rooms, in bathrooms, at the grocery store, and anywhere else is not a threat to women's

safety. As a representative for a feminist health center and as a survivor of sexual assault, I can confidently say that attacks such as these that seek to remove trans people from public spaces do not exist to keep women and girls safer. We at Mabel Wadsworth Center urge you to oppose ballot measure LD 2239. Thank you.