

William Wood
Bangor
LD 2239

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

My name is William A. Wood (MD), I'm a resident of Bangor and work as a physician in Presque Isle.

I very strongly oppose the proposed ballot measure, LD 2239.

One of our children is a young adult Trans person who graduated second in her class from Bangor High, and was admitted to numerous of the most selective colleges in the country.

Given the attacks on Trans folks in the U.S., she's considering emigrating, for her safety and future happiness. I hope Maine (and our country) doesn't continue to lose talented young people who are fleeing to escape attacks like that of the proposed ballot initiative. We know several families in similar situations who have already emigrated.

As an active citizen, I feel anger and disgust that a right-wing midwestern billionaire couple, the Uihleins, want to use this Maine ballot initiative to influence our upcoming midterm elections.

According to mainstream media investigations (The Financial Times and others), Richard Uihlein is the biggest donor to a PAC seeking a federal abortion ban. He was a major backer for the rally preceding the January 6th attack on the U.S. Capitol. He donated \$4 million to a PAC supporting an effort in Ohio to require a 60% majority for citizen-initiated constitutional amendments in that state, which, fortunately lost. Etc. etc.

This Maine ballot initiative, if it becomes law, will waste schools' resources on things like requiring that staff check students' birth certificates to use the bathroom. It will marginalize vulnerable students. It will not enhance school sports — that is a red herring, in my view. This "culture war" distraction turns the public's attention away from the underfunding of schools, the precarious financial status of many rural hospitals, threats to Maine's environment and natural resource-based economy, the outsized political influence of billionaires on our democracy, and so many other issues that are actually critical to our future.

We moved to Maine over a decade ago, and have been very happy here, in large part because of the welcoming environment for newcomers of various backgrounds, and because our family could thrive here. If this initiative becomes law, I am certain many young families who could contribute greatly to our state will choose to live elsewhere, where they feel they would live safer and happier lives.

Our government should not police nor control our bodies.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my grave concerns to the Committee.