



Testimony before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
May 8, 2025

In opposition to:

LD 233	An Act to An Act to Prohibit Biological Males from Participating in School Athletic Programs and Activities
LD 868	An Act to An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools
LD 1002	An Act to An Act to Protect Children's Identification by Requiring Public Schools to Use the Name and Gender Specified on a Child's Birth Certificate
LD 1134	An Act to An Act to Prohibit Males from Participating in Female Sports or Using Female Facilities
LD 1704	An Act to An Act to Prohibit a School Administrative Unit from Adopting a Policy That Allows a Student to Use a Restroom Designated for Use by the Opposite Sex

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Members of the Committee,

I am Rev. Jane Field, Executive Director of the Maine Council of Churches, a coalition of seven Protestant denominations with more than 400 congregations in Maine that have over 50,000 parishioners.

The central value of love of neighbor grounds our work, as does the belief that every person is made in the image of God, who has given humanity a rich variety of gender identities and sexual orientations. We affirm that **our transgender and nonbinary siblings are beloved children of God and we know that the church and the world are better places because of them.** As people of faith, we are called to **work for justice**, and to **protect the vulnerable and stand with the marginalized, including transgender and nonbinary youth.** Therefore, the Council **opposes passage of the bills before you.**

Some say that banning trans girls from participating in school sports is **“a matter of fairness.” Fairness to whom?** Certainly not to trans girls, who would be ostracized and excluded. To cisgender girls? Why—given the fact that **height, weight, musculature, speed vary widely among all student athletes?** Is it unfair to shorter girls that tall girls are allowed to play on the basketball team? Is it unfair to tall girls that girls with petite bodies excel more easily at gymnastics? Is it unfair that kids of wealthy parents who can afford private coaches and premier team fees are on school teams with kids from families who can’t afford those luxuries? **I don’t see any bills before you that would ban tall girls from basketball or short girls from gymnastics or rich kids from public school teams. Why not?**

My daughter was a student athlete, a lacrosse goalie, from 2nd grade through college. Some of you know her—she’s tiny, just 5’2.” Yet she always preferred training with and playing against older, stronger, bigger girls. She attended training camps for boy lacrosse players and warmed up by having varsity girls, or boys, or even men shoot on her in goal. Why? *Because it made her a better player.* Fairness was never the issue. Becoming the best goalie she could be was—and she recognized **having the opportunity to play with and against players with bodies different from her own helped her—it didn’t hurt her.**

You’ve also heard that these bills are about the **safety** of cisgender girls that share bathrooms and locker rooms with trans girls. But **the real safety issue is for trans girls who are forced to use boys’ bathrooms and locker rooms—studies show they are not safe in those spaces. Cisgender straight boys sexually assault girls every single day in this country—but they don’t pretend to be trans girls to do it.** They do it in our streets, on dates, in cars, in our homes, often with no consequences. **Trans girls aren’t the real threat.**

Don’t be fooled. **These bills aren’t about fairness. And they’re not about safety. They’re about persecuting, targeting, and scapegoating a small number of already vulnerable, marginalized kids, in service to a broader political agenda.** Let’s be honest. In the 1950’s, the laws were never really about drinking fountains. And in 2025, these bills really aren’t about bathrooms.

That’s why the Maine Council of Churches urges you to vote “OUGHT NOT TO PASS.”