



**Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary  
LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms,  
Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and  
Postsecondary Schools**

**May 8, 2025**

**Beth Parlato  
Independent Women's Law Center**

Dear Members of Joint Committee on Judiciary,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of LD 868.

My name is Beth Parlato, and I'm submitting this testimony on behalf of Independent Women's Law Center, where I serve as Senior Legal Advisor. Independent Women fights for women by expanding support for policy solutions that aren't just well intended, but actually enhance freedom, opportunities, and well-being. We are also the authors of the [Stand with Women Act](#), which is the sex-definition and preservation of female spaces model legislation that has been implemented across the country.

Bureaucrats and elitists on the state level are redefining language to fit a false narrative, all designed to erase that women exist as biologically distinct from men. As a result, women and girls across the country have been forced to sacrifice their opportunities, privacy, and safety.

LD 868 would stop this sort of interpretive overreach and judicial activism by preserving the legal existence of women, as distinct from men.

This bill does so in two ways. First, it clarifies the long-standing meaning of sex-based words like 'woman,' and 'female,' already used in 43 Maine state statutes. Second, it provides legal protection to defend women's single-sex spaces and athletic opportunities.

LD 868 reflects recent action on the federal level that restores biological reality and protects sex-based rights by recognizing that there are only two sexes, male and female. Additionally, a federal district court ruling recently struck down the past presidential administration's attempt to redefine 'sex' in Title IX to include 'gender identity'—vacating the unlawful regulations nationwide and ensuring the original meaning of Title IX is preserved across the country, including Maine. Maine must follow suit by passing LD 868.

Recent action on the federal level safeguarding women's rights is encouraging, but is not enough to ensure the rights of women and girls in Maine are upheld. Maine must take action.

Similar legislation as LD 868 has received bipartisan support across the United States. Recent [polling](#) proves that Americans overwhelmingly agree that Maine has an important governmental interest in preventing sex discrimination and preserving single-sex spaces and opportunities. But we cannot fight sex discrimination if we cannot define 'sex.'

Efforts to legally eradicate the difference between the sexes fundamentally erases women by depriving them of their dignity, safety, and well-being. Men and women are biologically different and as such have a legal right to single-sex spaces and opportunities.

In summary, LD 868 does an excellent job to define male and female terms and protect women's private spaces. It does not create any special rights for women nor does it take rights away from others. It simply safeguards women's existing legal right to have single-sex spaces to ensure privacy and safety. This bill is a sharp rebuke to the efforts to legally eradicate the difference between the sexes and fundamentally erase women by depriving them of their dignity, safety, and well-being. Men and women are biologically different and as such have a legal right to single-sex spaces.

LD 868 would ensure women and girls in Maine never have to face discrimination for wanting to have their own sports and spaces. Please stand with women and support LD 868 today.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Beth Parlato*

**Beth Parlato**

*Senior Legal Advisor*

*Independent Women Law Center*

## **TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY RILEY GAINES**

### **Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools**

**May 8, 2025**

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 554. I am grateful to Rep. Caruso and the many co-sponsors for introducing this legislation. I am a former student at the University of Kentucky where I was a member of UK's Women's Swim and Dive Team. I finished my career as a 12x NCAA All-American, 5x SEC champion, SEC record holder in the 200 butterfly making me the 10th fastest American of all time in the event, and 2x Olympic trial qualifier.

By now my story is well-known, not because I ever wanted it to be, but because it was necessary to share in order to restore sanity to the protection of women's rights. On March 17th, 2022, my teammates and I, as well as female swimmers from universities around the country, were forced to compete against a male named Lia Thomas. Thomas was allowed to compete in the women's division after competing as a member of the University of Pennsylvania Men's Swim Team for three years. We watched on the side of the pool as Thomas swam to a national title in the 500-yard freestyle, beating out the most impressive and accomplished female swimmers in the country, including Olympians and American record holders. (Previously, Thomas had been ranked in the 400ths—at best—in the men's division.)

When I raced Thomas in the 200-yard freestyle at the NCAA Women's Championships in the Georgia Tech pool, we tied. We ended up with the same time—down to the hundredth of a second. Having only one trophy, the NCAA handed it to Thomas and told me I would go home empty-handed because Thomas needed to hold the trophy for photo purposes. I was

shocked. I felt betrayed and belittled, reduced to a photo-op. But my feelings did not matter.

I can attest to the tears that I witnessed from finishers who missed being named an All-American by one place. I can attest to the extreme discomfort in the locker room from 18-year-old girls exposed to male genitalia and having to undress with a male watching in the same room. I can attest to the anger and frustration expressed by girls who had worked so hard and sacrificed so much to get to this moment, only to have to compete in what felt like a farce. And I can attest to the fact that, around the country, female athletes who protested the inclusion of Lia Thomas in the women's division were threatened, intimidated, and emotionally blackmailed into silence and submission.

By allowing Thomas to join the women's swim team and compete in women's collegiate meets, the University of Pennsylvania, the Ivy League, and the colleges and universities that hosted Thomas at these meets prevented other women from competing at all, subjected female swimmers to a loss of privacy and dignity, inflicted emotional harm on female swimmers, and suppressed the free speech rights of female students to advocate for their rights.

Allowing males to compete in women's sports is unfair to women, who have fought for their spot on their team and for the opportunity to compete on the junior varsity or varsity level. And it is unfair because of the stark, athletic differences between men and women, where the severity of potential injury at the hands of a male athlete is immense, and where opportunities and resources for women are already extremely scarce.

***Unfortunately, my story and the experiences of D1 swimmers are not unique. Across the country, and across various sports, female athletes, particularly at the college and high school level, are losing not only awards but opportunities to compete at all. Over 1,900 females have been displaced by males competing in women's sporting events.***

***Schools must not be allowed to continue discriminating against female athletes. And where they have discriminated, they must be held accountable. Thankfully we are making progress as a country, but Maine***

***still has a responsibility to codify sex-based words and a law that keeps men out of women's sports.***

LD 868 achieves both of these objectives.

This bill would codify our common understanding of sex-based words like 'man' and 'woman' already used in 43 state statutes so when it comes to interpreting Maine laws that reference these terms, we are all speaking a common language. It would prevent judicial activism and protect single-sex spaces and opportunities.

I urge you to pass LD 868, stand with the nearly 700,000 women and girls in Maine, and bring Maine in line with federal executive action to define the sexes and join 16 other states who have done the same. It's time Maine defines what a woman is and protects its female athletes.

Sincerely,

Riley Gaines

**TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY PAYTON MCNABB**

**Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary  
LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms,  
Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and  
Postsecondary Schools**

**May 8, 2025**

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Payton McNabb. I am an Ambassador at Independent Women and a former Volleyball athlete. I urge you to pass LD 868 to protect female athletes from being permanently injured at the hands of a male player.

On Sept 1st, 2022, I was struck in the head by a spiked ball during my high school volleyball game by a male on the opposing team. As a result of the sheer impact of the ball, I received a concussion and neck injury.

I love sports—the camaraderie, discipline, the team bonding, and the confidence for the future. I was a 3 sport athlete in high school—participating in softball, basketball, and volleyball.

I was always very aware of the possibility of injury during competitive play, but my experience on the court that day was different. The hit was so violent that I was knocked unconscious, lying in a fencing position for over 30 seconds. Years later, my body and mind are still recovering from the hit. I still suffer from partial paralysis on my right side, vision problems, cognitive issues, constant headaches, and more.

This incident was 100% avoidable if my rights as a female athlete had not been excluded on the basis of being inclusive to allow a male to compete with

women. I nor my teammates ever agreed to play against a male athlete. We were forced to by our state athletic association.

If the adults in the room don't start standing up and putting an end to this senseless threat to females, there won't be women's sports. Women have a right to a fair and equal opportunity on and off the playing field. Men have no place in our single-sex spaces.

I love being an athlete, as do the other girls I play with. I write to you today to represent not just myself but to ensure all female athletes—my little sister, my cousins, my teammates—have access to fair competition.

Women deserve to compete on a level playing field without fear of injury. I may be one of the first to come before you with an injury, but I can assure you I will not be the last if we don't protect female athletes. This is why it is crucial that you pass LD 868 to prevent other women from suffering from injuries such as my own. LD 868 goes even further by defining sex-based terms and protecting other single-sex spaces.

For these reasons, I urge you to stand with the nearly 700,000 women and girls in Maine and support LD 868 today.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Payton McNabb  
*Ambassador  
Independent Women*



## **TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY AMIE ICHIKAWA**

### **Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools**

**May 8, 2025**

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Amie Ichikawa. I am an ambassador for Independent Women and the founder of Woman II Woman, a support group for incarcerated women, and I urge you to support LD 868.

I served nearly five years in the Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla, one of the largest women's prisons in the country. During that time, I personally experienced how vital it is to have single-sex spaces for the safety, privacy, and rehabilitation of incarcerated women. When California passed Senate Bill 132—the so-called “Transgender Respect, Agency, and Dignity Act”—in 2020, it allowed male inmates to transfer into women's prisons, even if they had not undergone any “gender-affirming” treatment. I began receiving desperate calls, letters, and emails from women still in prison, begging for help as men were being placed in their cells and their lives were turned upside down.

Women in prison already live in conditions where privacy is almost nonexistent. Now, they are being forced to share small, overcrowded spaces with men, including those with violent criminal histories and no intention of transitioning. These are not hypothetical concerns. I know of a male inmate who was isolated in a men's prison for assaulting his bunkmates but was transferred directly into a women's general population cell with seven women.

LD 868 is a necessary step to define common sex-based terms such as “female” and “male” in Maine law. Without clear definitions, policies that prioritize ideology over reality will continue to endanger the safety, privacy,

and rights of women. This bill also ensures the protection of single-sex spaces, which are critical for the dignity and well-being of women in prisons, shelters, sports, and other settings.

We all want to ensure the rights of all are protected, but when men invade women's spaces, like prisons, women are disproportionately harmed and their rights are discarded in the name of inclusion. You can be both for equality and single-sex spaces.

This issue is deeply personal for me. I know what it's like to live in a cell where privacy is a luxury and safety is a constant concern. I know the fear of being unable to escape, of not being listened to when you ask for help. But I also know the importance of standing up for those who cannot stand up for themselves.

I urge this committee to pass LD 868 to protect women's rights and restore fairness, safety, and dignity to spaces where women are most vulnerable.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Amie Ichikawa  
*Ambassador*  
*Independent Women*

**TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY KIM RUSSELL**

**Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary  
LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms,  
Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and  
Postsecondary Schools**

**May 8, 2025**

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

I am Coach Kim Russell, Ambassador at Independent Women and advocate for women and girls. I am writing to you today to urge you to support LD 868. Women's sports have been my life and my passion. In college, I played two sports at the DI level, and I have been a women's lacrosse coach for 29 years. I have been inducted into three halls of fame for my contributions to the game of lacrosse and was appointed to the Women in Sports Commission for World Lacrosse (the governing body for the sport of lacrosse worldwide) in 2024.

Many of my players affectionately refer to me as the "Hippie Love Coach," not only because I'm a yoga instructor, am often barefoot, read energy, and coach intuitively, but because I've given countless individuals a safe space to thrive and feel a sense of belonging.

I've coached running down the sideline while nursing one child, with another in a backpack, while a third runs with me. I am a woman, through and through.

When I accepted the job as Head Women's Lacrosse Coach & Wellness Instructor at Oberlin in August of 2018, I was so excited to be a part of an institution known for its academic rigor, open-minded dialogue, and freedom to express oneself. And then, I learned the truth. Oberlin—like many

institutions of higher-ed these days—only supports free speech when your values align with theirs.

Without protections, opportunities to compete are taken away from women—to say nothing of trophies and awards. If allowed, this will endanger women in sports and private spaces and take away opportunities from women in sports and academia.

If passed into law, LD 868, which matches the President's executive order to define 'sex,' would protect women's hard earned rights—including our right to privacy and our right to not be subjects of sex-discrimination. By defining common sex-based words—words like 'woman' and 'female' already used in Maine statutes—this bill will safeguard female private spaces from attack by those who seek to manipulate the definition of words to achieve policies that lack political support. It will prevent men who say they identify as women from gaining an unfettered right to women's spaces.

If we can't define sex, Maine will have no way to fight sex discrimination. By allowing males into women's private spaces, women are being groomed to be sexually assaulted—or worse—sexually trafficked. They are being told to “be quiet” when there is a male in the women's bathroom or locker room—when their gut instinct tells them it's unsafe.

You, Committee members, have the opportunity to be heroes for women's rights and uphold biological truth. This is a widely supported issue and one that has received bi-partisan support at the state and federal level.

Please vote yes for LD 868 for the sake of the nearly 700,000 women and girls in Maine.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kim Russell  
*Ambassador*  
*Independent Women*

For questions, email [states@iww.org](mailto:states@iww.org).

 **Independent** Women®

## **TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY ALLISON COGHAN**

### **Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools**

**May 8, 2025**

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

I'm Allison Cohan, an Ambassador for Independent Women and a graduate of the University of Wyoming and member of Kappa Kappa Gamma (KKG).

In my freshman year of college I decided to go through sorority rush at University of Wyoming. When joining Kappa Kappa Gamma (KKG), I found a tight-knit group of friends in my sorority sisters. My senior year this was challenged when a male wanted to access our female-only community.

After Kappa admitted the man, our experience is best described as a "grieving process," especially for my fellow sorority members with histories of sexual assault by men. These women were now forced to allow a man 24/7 access to the place that they lived.

The lesson I learned, and what I'm advocating for, is that when men enter into women's spaces, they take valued positions, memberships, and opportunities from very deserving women.

The lessons I learned from my experience will stay with me forever. I'm reminded every day of how important this fight is, and that I'm not doing this for me. I'm doing this for future generations, my niece and my cousin, so that they can enjoy all of these things that I got the chance to enjoy and not have to fight for it.

I share my experience today to qualify why it is so important to pass LD 868. If passed into law, this bill would protect women's hard earned rights and

spaces. By defining common sex-based words, this bill will help safeguard female opportunities and private spaces from attack by those who seek to manipulate the definition of words to achieve policies that lack political support.

This bill simply clarifies definitions of words that Maine is already using in law, so that we are all speaking a common language. It will give meaning to common words so that Maine courts have clarity when interpreting laws that already exist, something I wish that was not necessary but has proven to be crucial to ensuring women don't lose their sex-based rights. It also asserts the state's interest in maintaining single-sex spaces in order to protect privacy, fairness, safety, and equal opportunity.

This is why I urge you to pass LD 868. It is crucial that Maine law protects private spaces for women.

At a bare minimum, Maine's over 690,000 women are entitled to expect that when public officials designate spaces as single-sex, those spaces are, in fact, reserved for either women or men, not both.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Allison Cohan  
*Ambassador  
Independent Women*

## **TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY MADISAN DEBOS**

### **Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools**

**May 8, 2025**

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Madisan DeBos, and I am a collegiate cross-country and track athlete. I am writing today to urge you to support Maine Legislative Document 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools.

Running is a part of who I am. It's in my family, and it's something I've loved since I was a child, watching my mom, a former All-American athlete, compete in races. From the time I begged to run my first five-mile race as a kindergartner, to the countless hours of training in high school and college, I have given my all to this sport. But during my freshman year at Southern Utah State University, I faced a challenge I never expected.

In 2020, during the indoor track season, I competed in a distance medley relay against an athlete who had previously competed for three years as a male. Now, that athlete was racing in the women's division. Competing against a male created a collective sense of defeat among my teammates and me before the race began.

At the start of the final leg of the relay, the athlete's team was in sixth place. By the end of that one-mile stretch, the athlete had pulled his team up to second place. I will never forget the moment his coach yelled "Slow down!", a phrase I had never heard directed at a competitor in a championship race.



Even while holding back, he was dominating female athletes who had trained their entire lives for a fair shot at victory.

My team regularly trained alongside the men's team, so we knew firsthand the physical advantages that male athletes have. We'll do the same workouts, but they'll do significantly more reps than us, and the times they have to do it are significantly faster. No amount of practice or determination can erase those biological differences.

Women's sports exist because men and women are not the same. We push ourselves to our absolute limits, but when a male enters a female race, we are left competing for second place at best. It's demoralizing, it's unfair, and it undermines the entire purpose of women's athletics.

Though the athlete I competed against is now out of eligibility, the issue remains. More and more males are competing in women's sports, and if we do not act, female athletes will continue to lose the opportunities they have spent their lives working toward.

I refuse to stay silent. My teammates, coaches, friends, and family have supported me in speaking out, and I will continue to advocate for fairness in women's sports. But this issue is bigger than any one athlete or team. If we truly want to protect women's sports and single-sex spaces, we must come together and use our voices to demand change.

I urge this committee to pass Maine LD 868 and stand up for fairness, opportunity, and integrity in women's athletics.

Thank you,

Madisan DeBos  
*Ambassador*  
*Independent Women*

## **TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY HANNAH HOLTMEIER**

### **Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools**

**May 8, 2025**

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Hannah Holtmeier. I am an Independent Women's ambassador and senior at the University of Nebraska and member of Kappa Kappa Gamma. I am writing to you today to urge you to support Maine LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools.

In the fall of 2022, my sorority sisters and I were forced into a situation that I can confidently say none of us wanted to be in. Without our consent, we were forced to share a sorority house with a grown man. Since then, we have been working to tell our story and help women across the country in similar situations find justice.

I believe that everyone deserves a safe space. A space where they can relax and open up to others who understand them. For me, that space was my sorority house. For other women, that space is in the locker room or on the court with their team.

When men start to infiltrate these spaces, women are exposed to and forced into uncomfortable situations. I imagine every one of you has a female in your life that you care about ... now imagine you get a call from that woman saying that she is forced to share her college housing (or any private space) with a

man. That's the call my dad got back in 2022 ... one call he never imagined he'd be getting from me. We were all just college girls who were promised a female-only sorority experience, and we were suddenly forced to share our private space with a male.

I share my experience today to qualify why it is so important for this committee to pass LD 868. If passed into law, this bill would protect women's hard-earned rights and spaces. By defining common sex-based words—words like 'woman' and 'female' already used in 43 unique Maine state statutes—this bill will help safeguard female opportunities and private spaces from attack by those who seek to manipulate the definition of words to achieve policies that lack political support.

You must support this bill and stand with the over 690,000 women and girls in Maine. It's the right thing to do.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Hannah Holtmeier  
*Ambassador*  
*Independent Women*

## **TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY MADDIE RAMAR**

### **Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools**

**May 8, 2025**

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Maddie Ramar. I am an ambassador for Independent Women, a nursing student at the University of Wyoming and a proud member of the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority. I am writing in support of Maine LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools.

When I joined Kappa Kappa Gamma, I was looking for a community of women, a sisterhood where I could feel supported and safe. For a time, that's exactly what I found. Living in a women-only sorority house provided a sanctuary during a stressful and formative time in my life. It was a place where my friends and I could grow, bond, and support each other, free from the pressures and concerns that often arise in mixed-sex spaces.

But that sense of safety and belonging was disrupted in the fall of 2022 when my sorority admitted a male student. Despite initial assurances from leadership that this individual would not be allowed to join, the decision was reversed, and active members were pressured to vote for his admission. Those of us who raised concerns were labeled as "transphobic."

This male student shared our living space, and while we tried to maintain a sense of normalcy, his presence has fundamentally changed the environment. He is physically larger than the rest of us, and many of my sisters feel uncomfortable and unsafe in what is supposed to be our home.

Women's organizations like Kappa Kappa Gamma were created to provide spaces where women can thrive, free from concerns about privacy and safety.

Female-only spaces are not just about tradition; they are about creating environments where women can feel secure, supported, and empowered.

When my sisters and I sought legal action to protect our female space, the Federal Judge dismissed our case, citing “the court will not define ‘woman’ today.”

LD 868 is essential for ensuring your judges have clarity on the most basic sex-based terms so they can appropriately interpret your statutes. By clearly defining sex-based terms such as “female” and “male,” this bill ensures that women’s private spaces and opportunities are protected for females. It provides clarity and consistency in Maine law, ensuring that policies cannot be twisted to compromise the rights of women and girls.

My story is not unique. Across the country, women’s spaces and organizations are being challenged in ways that disregard the importance of biological reality. This issue is bigger than just one sorority; it’s about preserving the right of all women to have safe and private spaces, whether in sports, shelters, or student housing.

I urge this committee to pass Maine LD 868 and take a stand for fairness, safety, and common sense. Women’s spaces matter, and they are worth protecting.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Maddie Ramar  
*Ambassador  
Independent Women*

**TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY JAYLYN WESTENBROEK**

**Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary  
LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms,  
Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and  
Postsecondary Schools**

**May 8, 2025**

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Jaylyn Westenbroek, and I am an ambassador for Independent Women, an alumna of the University of Wyoming, and a former member of Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority. Today, I am sharing my story to express my strong support for Maine LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools.

When I joined Kappa Kappa Gamma, I found more than a sorority, I found a home. My sisters were there for me during a difficult time in my freshman year, and their kindness inspired me to rush. For a while, it was the best decision I had ever made. I made lifelong friends, gained valuable leadership experience, and felt a strong sense of belonging in our women-only community.

That sense of safety and sisterhood began to fall apart in the fall of 2022, when our chapter admitted a male. Despite assurances from sorority leadership that this individual would not live in the house if anyone felt uncomfortable, those promises were broken. When my sisters and I voiced our concerns, we were dismissed, silenced, and, ultimately, pushed out.

The sorority house was supposed to be a safe space, a haven where women could support each other without fear or discomfort. But with the presence of a male in our home, that safety was compromised. Many of us felt uncomfortable, but leadership pressured us to accept the situation, labeling

anyone who objected as “transphobic.” Efforts to request a revote were shut down, and those of us who stood up for our concerns faced retaliation.

Eventually, I was forced to resign my membership after being told that I wasn’t a “true Kappa” for advocating for the sorority’s original mission: a sisterhood for women. It was a heartbreaking decision to leave behind the community I had poured my time, effort, and heart into, but I couldn’t stay silent in the face of such injustice.

LD 868 is essential for protecting the integrity of female-only spaces. By defining sex-based terms such as “female” and “male,” this bill ensures that spaces designed for women remain safe, supportive, and fair. It’s about protecting women’s spaces, from sports teams to shelters, where privacy and safety are paramount.

I urge this committee to pass LD 868 and take a stand for the safety, dignity, and rights of women and girls in Maine. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jaylyn Westenbroek  
*Ambassador*  
*Independent Women*

## **TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY CYNTHIA MONTELEONE**

### **Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools**

**May 8, 2025**

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Cynthia Monteleone, and I am a world champion track athlete specializing in the 400-meter race. I am also the mother of a high school track athlete who, like me, has experienced the devastating impact of unfair competition in women's sports. I am writing to urge you to support LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools.

In 2018, I competed at the World Masters Athletics Championships in Málaga, Spain, where I raced against a male athlete from Colombia. I was fortunate to win that race by just a few tenths of a second, securing my place in the final round. But at the 2019 World Championship indoor meet in Poland, the male athlete won silver in the 80-meter hurdles, beating my teammate, who trained harder than anyone I know in the hurdles.

When I expressed concerns about the fairness of allowing males to compete in women's events, I was met with hostility. USA Track and Field officials told me, "For your own safety, you might want to keep your mouth shut."

Then, my teenage daughter, Margaret, raced a male athlete who had just switched from the boys to the girls volleyball and track teams, injuring a volleyball player and beating my daughter after only 2 weeks practice.

Women's sports exist for a reason: to provide female athletes with a level playing field. Allowing males to compete in women's events disregards the physical differences that impact performance, such as lung capacity, muscle mass, and overall strength. These advantages remain, even after hormone



therapy. The reality is that when males are allowed to compete in women's sports, female athletes are the ones who lose.

Athletes like my daughter and my teammate should not have to wonder whether their years of training will be rendered meaningless. I refuse to be silent, and I refuse to let my daughter's generation lose what women have fought so hard to gain.

I urge this committee to pass LD 868 and take a stand for fairness, safety, and equal opportunity in women's sports.

Thank you,

Cynthia Montelone  
*Ambassador*  
*Independent Women*

## **TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY LINNEA SALTZ**

### **Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools**

**May 8, 2025**

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Linnea Saltz. I am a former Division 1 track and field athlete from Southern Utah University, and I am writing to urge you to support LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools.

I dedicated my college years to my sport. My days started at 5:45 a.m. with training, followed by work, then night classes. The sacrifices were immense, but I was proud to put in the effort, knowing that my hard work could result in success on the track. In 2019, I won the Outdoor Big Sky Conference Championship in the 800-meter race. My goal was to do it again and to earn an All-American title before my collegiate career ended.

Suddenly, everything I worked for was on the verge of being taken away. I learned that a male athlete, who had previously competed on the men's team at the University of Montana, would now be racing in my division as a woman. His best times in the 800-meter and 1500-meter races weren't just good, they were the world records for women. These were now times that my female teammates and I had to compete against.

I raised my concerns with the NCAA, my coaches, and my athletic director. While many people sympathized with me, the NCAA refused to take action. Instead, female athletes like myself were told to stay silent, to accept the loss of opportunities we had spent years training for.

Advocates for allowing males to compete in women's sports claim it is an issue of inclusivity. But what about fairness? Male athletes are not being

asked to compete against those with a biological advantage over them. Why should women? Being an athlete is not a right, it is a privilege earned through dedication and hard work. The policies that allow males to compete against females are erasing that work and discouraging young women from even trying.

During my final season, I competed against this male athlete in a conference championship. Though he did not race in my event, I watched as he won the women's mile and helped his team place in a relay. I will never forget hearing his coach shout from the sidelines, not encouragement to push harder, but instructions to slow down. Female athletes were giving everything they had, racing at their absolute limit, while the person beating them was being told to hold back. That is not fair competition.

Women's sports exist for a reason. The opportunities I fought for should not be taken away from the next generation of female athletes. We need laws in Maine that protect fairness, so that female athletes can compete knowing that their hard work and talent, not biology, will determine the outcome.

I urge you to pass Maine LD 868 and take a stand for fairness, opportunity, and integrity in women's sports.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Linnea Saltz  
*Ambassador*  
*Independent Women*

## **TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY DANA FALL**

### **Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools**

**May 8, 2025**

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Dana Fall. I am an Ambassador for Independent Women and a professional golfer. I urge you to pass Maine LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools.

I have been playing golf since I was a kid. I played all through high school and earned a scholarship to play for the University of Nevada Las Vegas. After graduating college, I decided to pursue golf professionally. In 2017, my rookie year, I won the Epson Tour. I qualified for the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) tour soon after and have been a pro ever since.

As a professional athlete, I have experienced firsthand the challenges that arise when female-only spaces and protections are eroded. I competed in a tournament where I along with hundreds of female golfers were forced to share the course with a male athlete. Despite undergoing hormone therapy, this competitor retained [significant physical advantages](#) that made it impossible for women to compete on equal footing.

These situations are becoming all too common. Women are losing opportunities in sports, education, and other spaces where single-sex considerations are vital. The need for legislative action has never been clearer.

LD 868 is not about exclusion. It is about ensuring that women's rights, privacy, and opportunities are not compromised. This bill provides clarity by defining terms already used in Maine law, ensuring that words like 'female' and 'male' cannot be reinterpreted to erode the hard-earned protections for women and girls.

If passed, this legislation will ensure that women's single-sex spaces remain safe, secure, and fair.

I urge this committee to stand with the women and girls of Maine and support LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dana Fall  
*Ambassador*  
*Independent Women*

## TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY AMY OLSON

### Maine Joint Committee on Judiciary LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools

May 8, 2025

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Amy Olson. I am an ambassador for Independent Women, a professional golfer on the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) tour, a proud mother, and an advocate for fairness in women's sports. I urge you to support Maine LD 868, An Act to Ensure Equity and Safety in Athletics, Restrooms, Changing Rooms and Housing at Elementary, Secondary and Postsecondary Schools.

Since I was nine years old, I have dedicated my life to becoming the best athlete I could be. I trained rigorously, lifted weights, and pushed myself to maximize the potential of my body. My commitment to golf has allowed me to compete at the highest level, earning accolades such as holding the NCAA record for 20 collegiate wins and competing professionally on the LPGA Tour for 10 years. However, the opportunities I worked so hard for are now under threat due to policies that disregard the biological differences between men and women.

In women's golf, this issue has come to the forefront with male competitors, displacing female athletes in professional tournaments.

Males inherently possess [physical advantages](#) over females, even after hormone therapy. These advantages—greater upper body strength, higher clubhead speed, and longer driving distances—are significant in golf, where every yard matters. Women's sports exist to provide female athletes with a fair chance to compete, excel, and achieve their dreams.

LD 868 is a necessary step to protect fairness and equal opportunity. By clearly defining sex-based terms such as “female” and “male,” this bill ensures that women’s sports remain a space where females can compete on an even playing field. It also safeguards single-sex spaces, where women and girls deserve privacy and safety.

Women’s sports are about more than trophies. They are a foundation for developing leadership, character, and resilience. My own journey in golf has shaped who I am today, and I want my daughter to have the same opportunities I had to grow, compete, and excel in a fair environment. Without legislative action, I fear that future generations of female athletes will be robbed of these experiences.

As a mother and a professional athlete, I believe it is my responsibility to stand up for what is right. Supporting LD 868 is not about excluding anyone; it is about ensuring fairness and safeguarding the opportunities that women and girls deserve.

I urge this committee to support LD 868 and take a stand for fairness, integrity, and the protection of women in Maine.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Amy Olson  
*Ambassador*  
*Independent Women*