

NO on 1

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Mainers Affected by Discrimination Speak Out Against Question 1

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PORTLAND, Maine - Martin Ripley of Whitefield, George O'Brien of Newcastle and Adam Flanders of Belfast, all victims of discrimination, joined Maine Won't Discriminate today in speaking out against Question 1. They shared their experiences with discrimination based upon their sexual orientation in employment and education in Maine.

"Maine people deserve to know the truth about the anti-discrimination law and why it is necessary," began Jesse Connolly, campaign manager for Maine Won't Discriminate. "George O'Brien, Martin Ripley and Adam Flanders, the men that joined us today, are just a few of the people that have had the courage to speak publicly about their experiences with discrimination. The things that happened to them, the discriminate they endured, should never happen again. No one should have to live with the fear of being fired because of their sexual orientation."

"The decision to speak publicly about my experience was not easy," remarked George O'Brien. "But, I realized that Maine voters needed to hear about my experience. They need to understand why Maine's Anti-Discrimination Law is necessary. All I want is to be judged by the quality of my work, not my sexual orientation. I want to know that my employer values my performance and work ethic, nothing more, nothing less. Without Maine's Anti-Discrimination Law, I won't be guaranteed that protection."

"Without this law, people that have been discriminated against, or believe that they have been discriminated against, have no choice but to accept the treatment," stated Marty Ripley. "When I lost my job, I had no chance to speak with the Human Rights Commission or to have my claim investigated, because without this law, discrimination based on sexual orientation is legal."

"Schools should be safe havens for all students," stated Adam Flanders. "Students should be treated fairly and have equal opportunity to pursue a well-rounded education. These are basic values that all Maine families support, but not all Maine students are guaranteed these rights. This is why I stand before you today. To share this simple message that, I hope, will significantly improve the daily lives of Maine's youth."

"Maine Won't Discriminate thanks George, Marty, and Adam for the willingness to speak publicly," conclude Connolly. "We all know that this is not easy and we commend them for their brave decision to share what have been painful experiences with the public. Hopefully, your actions today will show the people of Maine why it is so important that they vote No on 1 this November."