

My name is Susan Gerb and I am testifying against HB0359

I am a teacher and a sponsor of the Sexuality and Gender Alliance at the school where I work. I have the good fortune to spend time with some of the wonderful children that this bill so heartlessly targets.

Imagine if *YOU* were told the only way to play the sport your friends enjoyed is on the team whose gender was not yours. That would effectively bar you from participating in that sport.

This bill would prevent trans kids from playing sports, kids who just want to be kids as a gender that belongs to them as much as yours belongs to you.

School sports are for giving experiences to grow from. Teamwork. Facing disappointment and adversity. Supporting one another. Dedication. And how to have fun. Deny them these opportunities, and you deny them their education.

School sports are NOT for crowning winners and losers. Therefore, it is unnecessary and harmful to try to remove all of the many advantages and disadvantages that students have. Many students do have natural advantages. They're taller, faster, more muscular, even from wealthier families who can afford equipment and training. Yet we're not moved to ban tall students or rich students or the more agile. Sports teach us that we will meet players with advantages we don't have. They teach us to use that challenge to feed our determination.

Yes, trans athletes will make some players uncomfortable. But we long ago decided that, in America at least, the mere fact that you make someone uncomfortable is not a justification for exclusion, legal or otherwise.

This bill is bigotry. The sooner this committee rids itself of this stain on your good name, the better.