

Support SB 381

Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Fairness In Girls' Sports Act

Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

I urge you to pass this bill with a favorable report. I apologize in advance if you find anything in my letter offensive, I'm old school. But if you are worried about hurt feelings of transgender people, why don't you also consider the feelings and fears of thousands of girls facing the problem every day?

The United States has made great strides in promoting women's sports since Title IX revolutionized our country over 50 years ago. Ignoring this issue sets us back for women's rights for almost half a century. Sports are competitive, and like any competition they should be played on a fair and level playing field.

Yes, in ping pong or chess men may not have substantial physical advantage, so the playing field may be more level. However, the average male is bigger, faster, and stronger than the average female. And in the majority of sports it often becomes an advantage. Thus, it is not surprising that biological males who have access to a competitive women's sport are able to beat women's world records. It is also not surprising that we don't hear about biological females trying to join or succeeding in men's sports.

There are divisions, age brackets, and weight classes for a reason. Every league has very strict rules about participation. Childrens teams are separated strictly by the specific age of players, and **no higher age participant can join a lower age team**. A violation of that rule disqualifies the team. Perhaps we don't need to be so strict with the age brackets? Individuals can feel older or younger than their peers. Why not allow them to join a team, which age they feel most fitting?

My children participated in competitive volleyball during their school years. They played in local and national tournaments. Until puberty boys and girls of the same age compete on the same level. But with the onset of puberty boys gain an undisputed and obvious physical advantage. Try to watch and compare mens and womens volleyball. Even the height of the net is different. Coed teams play with lower height net, but men are not allowed to jump hit from the front row, and there are other limitations.

Over many years rules were developed in an attempt to create fair playing conditions. But now coaches are not only allowed but even encouraged to gain unfair advantage by bringing biological males on the team. What coach doesn't like winning? And so you see reports showing "girls" teams playing all their trans players on the field the entire match, while the rest of the girls cheering from the bench. At least in team sports, the entire team gets medals. But what about individual competitions?

It is hard to imagine the desperation of girls who spent countless days and nights trying to achieve top athletic awards, but at the end lose the top prizes to men of average ability wearing braids. Of course, the awards themselves are not so important - it is great to alleviate suffering and raise self-esteem of trans athletes. But girls made sacrifices and put their best effort in hopes of achieving sporting careers, obtaining scholarships, and for better chances in life. Didn't this esteemed legislature try to give women equal chances with men just a few short years ago?

Female athletes have fought too long and too hard for equal athletic opportunity to lose their protections. Males who suppress testosterone and use feminizing hormones do not mitigate male biological advantage. It's been shown time and again in a variety of sports and competition levels, men of average ability can out-compete top women's athletes. And the locker room situations are just priming for some awful crime to happen. That is why women's sports should be for women and girls.

Sincerely,
Mark Meyerovich
Gaithersburg, MD
District 15