

January 27, 2024

As a woman and mother of four, including three daughters, I strongly support HB156, The Fairness in Girls Sports Act. This bill is crucial to protect the right of girls and women to compete in sports programs exclusively with members of their biological sex.

Women have fought hard for equal opportunities in sports, as recognized by Title IX. Allowing biological males to compete in women's athletics undermines these hard-won rights and the very purpose of sex-separated sports programs. The biological advantages that males possess over females in athletics are well-documented and persist regardless of age or level of competition.

Recent events have highlighted the negative consequences of allowing biological males to compete in women's sports:

- 1.) **Lost Opportunities:** Talented female athletes are losing titles, trophies, records, scholarships, and spots on teams to biological males.
- 2.) **Privacy Concerns:** Female athletes are being forced to share locker rooms and changing spaces with biological males.
- 3.) **Safety Risks:** There have been instances of female athletes suffering serious injuries when competing against biological males.

Allowing biological males to compete in women's sports contradicts the spirit and intent of Title IX, which was designed to ensure equal athletic opportunities for women. As Riley Gaines, a former NCAA swimmer, stated before Congress, "a school that knowingly allows a male athlete to take a spot on a women's team, or allows a male athlete to take the field in a woman's game, is denying a female student an athletic opportunity. That is sex discrimination, and it violates Title IX."

Protecting women's sports is not about exclusion, but about maintaining fair and safe competition. As Payton McNabb, a high school athlete who suffered serious and permanent injuries competing against a transgender player, said, "If only my rights had been more important than a man's feelings."

I urge you to support HB156 to safeguard the rights, safety, and opportunities of female athletes. In the words of Riley Gaines, "There's a place for everyone to play sports in this country. But unsafe, unfair, and discriminatory practices towards women must stop."

-Kerry Gillespie

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