

February 13, 2023; 1:30 pm
House Committee on Education
Rep. Adam Thomas, Chair

Chloe Chaffin
Private Citizen, Topekan

HB2238 – Creating the "fairness in women's sports" act to require that female student athletic teams only include members who are biologically female.

Opponent, Written Only

Chair Thomas and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide Opponent testimony on HB2238.

As a lifelong queer Kansan, seeing legislation like this brought back year after year is incredibly hurtful. In a time when more folks, especially young folks, are moving out of Kansas than in, the purposeful bullying of young queer and trans folks is completely antithetical the midwest nice values we are supposed to hold and against our own self-interest.

The stated purpose is to protect girls' involvement in sports, so I shouldn't have to remind you all why extracurricular and physical activity is so good as an educational support, that sports teach teamwork and self-confidence, and that we want to encourage this participation and connectivity among Kansas youth.

We have a stronger state when we have more people learning these lessons earlier on, and trans-Kansans need to be a part of that vision. Perhaps our legislature could even stand to learn a thing or two about teamwork from these athletes here today. While conditioning and practice matter, what makes the real difference between good and great teams is their ability to share in the glory, make the extra pass, and study the game. These are all matters of effort and focus, not hormones.

Why then would we not hold the same hopes and values for trans kids? If you are scared that a cis-girl may one time one day in her entire career lose a race or game to a trans-girl based on a few cherry-picked national stories, you are all but guaranteeing that a trans-girl will lose every match that she is never allowed to play. If she is made to play with and against the boys, she is now at higher risk for harassment and exclusion thanks to the flames fanned by this very debate.

I see nothing but hypocrisy when this body makes headlines for ganging up on children, so much time and energy wasted on making a couple of children as young as elementary school squirm in their skin, all done so in the name of "protecting women's sports" but the same fervor for women's sports is not shown for the real threats. The real threats to girls' participation in

sports are underfunded programs, low pay for coaches/educators which hurts retention, and a lack of protection against abuse.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony. I cannot urge you enough to vote in opposition of HB2238