

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

Jennifer Chappell Deckert
Social Worker/Mother/Educator

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.

Jennifer Chappell Deckert, LMSW, PhD
Opponent to HB2238-Trans Athlete Sports Ban
Written Testimony

I am writing to you today to urge you to vote NO on the proposed House Bill 2238. As a social worker, educator, and mother, I support access to athletics for all children and youth.

I have three children, all of whom were competitive athletes at some point in their educational career. As cisgender children, they were never denied the opportunity to compete along with their peers in a way that they felt safe and validated as athletes and as people. Trans youth deserve the same opportunities, and must have access to all of the social, physical, and academic benefits that participation in athletics can provide. I would be thrilled if one of the lessons my children learned through sports was that all people have the right to participate in life activities in a way that supports and aligns with their gender identity, and that the decision to do so is solely theirs, as valuable and important members of our society. The whole team benefits when everyone can be included and accepted for who they are and the skills they bring to the team.

As a college professor, I work with trans youth who are finding their way in the world. They deserve the same dignity and respect as every other college student, and if they choose to express their talents through sports, they deserve the opportunity to do so without anyone invading their privacy or criticizing the validity of their participation. Many young athletes use their experience and skill in athletics to help fund their college education and to form meaningful and lasting friendships in college. Please vote no so that all children in the state of Kansas can participate in these activities in a respectful and dignified manner alongside their peers.

Please vote no on HB 2238.