

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

Gage Church
Pastor, Central Congregational United Church of Christ

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.

My name is Rev. Gage Church and I am pastor of Central Congregational United Church of Christ in Topeka. I live in District 50 and am writing in opposition to HB 2238.

HB 2238 needlessly discriminates against transgender youth, many of whom already struggle with hatred and discrimination. Having ministered to many transgender youth, I am aware that they often struggle with depression and suicidal thoughts because of the level of antagonism leveled at them and the isolation it causes. They just want to be themselves and to do the things they enjoy as themselves.

All children deserve to have the same opportunities to live, thrive and participate in their communities. This bill singles out one group of children and bans them from playing with their friends simply because they are different.

Media focus on a small number of transgender athletes who have succeeded on a national scale. This has created an environment where misinformation has flourished, resulting in bills like this one that target a very small minority of children and bullies them on a statewide scale.

Our children deserve better than a bill based on skewed information. I encourage you to not pass HB 2238 and make sure all children are able to play and learn and grow with their peers. Thank you for considering my testimony.