

For Senator Molly Baumgardner
Chair, Senate Education Committee
H.B. 2238 Fairness in Women's Sports Act

IN SUPPORT

Introduction

- 1) Good afternoon, Senators. My name is Autumn Caycedo. I am a former military family physician, retired hospitalist, and former collegiate rower who is involved with Save Women's Sports.
- 2) I am testifying in favor of the Fairness in Women's Sports Act.

Content

I have personally experienced the amazing transformation of Women's sports over the past 40 years. When I was in High School, there was no girls soccer. But Title IX ensured that I was allowed to try out and become the only girl on the boys team. The next year, 2 girls tried out along with me. The following year, 5 girls tried out. By 1989 so many girls were playing soccer that they finally started a girls team. Women's soccer participation has skyrocketed since then. It has been wonderful to witness how far the sport has come.

The same thing is now happening for girls wrestling. In middle school, my middle daughter had to start off wrestling boys, where she was at a huge disadvantage. The physiologic differences between men and women can be intimidating and deter women from participating, but after fighting hard for a league of their own, my daughter and her female classmates made up the first ever Women's wrestling team for Manhattan High School last school year. These girls can now compete fairly in a sport they love.

Since the introduction of Women's wrestling at the High School level, female athlete participation in this sport has flourished. United States of America Wrestling Kansas (USAWKS) voted into its bylaws that males and females would not wrestle one another. A letter to their members explained that "This is supported by data which has consistently shown that the greatest growth of female membership to happen when only gender specific wrestling permitted." Female athletes do not want to wrestle males. This is not surprising given that even within the same weight class, males have a lower percentage of body fat and more muscle. Male athletes also have significant advantages in hand size, grip strength, less joint laxity, and differing centers of gravity. These examples of Women's Sports exploding once sex as a category is protected is exactly why we need to pass this bill.

The reality is that identities don't play sports, bodies do. A male body has more fast twitch muscle fibers, bigger lungs, a larger heart, and higher red blood cell counts which enhance performance. In addition, even with testosterone suppression to 5nmol/l; the male athlete has 5 times the testosterone of the average female (range for women's testosterone 0.5-2.4

nmol/l). Essentially transgender athletes are legally doping with their elevated testosterone levels. If these facts don't convince you of male body privilege, watch a WNBA game compared to an NBA game and you can see the difference in speed and skill yourself despite the women using a 1 inch smaller ball and the 3 point arc being over 1 foot shorter.

This is also true of almost every other sport. Routinely younger boys can outperform more experienced female athletes. In 2017 a Boys 15 and under soccer team easily beat the Women's National team. Flo Jo's 1988 world record 100m time of 10.49 seconds still stands today. But there are dozens of High School age boys who run faster and hundreds of college men with better times. When a male bodied athlete crushes Flo Jo's record that has stood for over 35 years, women's records will no longer be attainable by actual women.

The physical and physiologic differences between males and females are undeniable. Competition categories exist to ensure fairness, safety, and the integrity of record performances. This is why a 22 year old assistant basketball coach cannot be allowed to identify as a Junior Varsity high school player and dominate the game. A 180 pound wrestler cannot identify as 100 pounds and join a lower weight class because the lighter wrestler would not only be disadvantaged, but also at risk for significant injury. There have already been injuries to female athletes from head to head competition with male bodied athletes. This season, my youngest daughter who won a spot on Anthony Middle School's varsity team sustained a gruesome elbow dislocation and fracture which required surgery in competition with a young man who overpowered her (wrestling is still co-ed in middle school). In 2020 World Rugby banned transgender women from competing in the female category secondary to the high risk of serious head and neck injuries to their female competitors. The video of the transgender athlete from Highlands High School in North Carolina spiking a volleyball into the face and seriously injuring an opponent went viral and made national headlines.

Closing

No one is banning transgender athletes from competition. Those athletes have every right to play sports and compete and should be encouraged to do so. However, the right to compete does not grant anyone the right to self identify into whatever category they so choose. My daughters have a right to safe and fair competition when they step onto the wrestling mat. Sex is a competition category that must be preserved or all the progress in women's sports over the past 40 years will be lost. Women's records will continue to be erased and girls will be **excluded** from the podium all in the name of "inclusion". Those who truly value women recognize this, and that is why we must pass the Fairness in Women's Sports Act.

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End Notes

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