

Opponent Testimony of HB2238
For the Senate Education Committee
March 6, 2023
Sylvie Althoff
Teacher

Chair Baumgardner and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent written testimony on House Bill 2238.

My name is Sylvie Althoff, and I am a teacher and transgender woman living in Lawrence. I am writing to oppose the proposed law that would forbid transgender students from competing in school sports, House Bill 2238. This bill flies in the face of medical science, pedagogy, and the reality of life for transgender youths in the state of Kansas.

School sports are very important for students of all ages and genders. Research has shown that competing in school sports has manifold benefits for students, and depriving individuals of these benefits due to their identity is discriminatory and cruel. Additionally, transgender students make up such a small percentage of the population that this proposed law is not necessary. Kansas currently only has two transgender students who compete in school sports—why is this legislative body wasting its time chasing a non-issue instead of pursuing policies that are actually important to Kansans? Finally, transgender students do not have any significant advantage over their classmates due to their gender assigned at birth. Medical treatment given to transgender individuals mostly or completely eliminates any such advantage. Any cases in which a transgender athlete is at an unfair advantage due to their biology is the domain of school athletic leagues to manage, not for the legislature

Transgender youths are particularly vulnerable individuals, and this needless persecution is demonstrably harmful to their safety. I would urge the committee to consider other methods of supporting women's athletics that do not single out minority groups to demonize. Kansans are counting on you to protect the safety and health of our state's young people.