



**JEAN SCHMIDT
STATE REPRESENTATIVE**

House Bill 61

Madam Chair and members of the committee,

Lenna Salz, a college track star said it best: “Men are able to celebrate fairness in their sports, so it should only make sense we can as well.” HB 61 will provide the fairness biologically born women deserve when competing in women’s sports. I believe in fairness. I believe in inclusiveness. I do not believe, however, transgender women have the right to compete against me or any other gender born woman, regardless of her age.

It has never been easy for women to participate in sports. When I was in high school, there was no cross country team for women. During that time, women were banned from running marathons over concern it would harm their ability to have children. Title IX was passed in part to correct these inequities.

In 2012, Paula Radcliff broke the record in long distance running only to have the title taken from her. Why? The marathon she competed in had men in it. While she did not beat the male winner to the finish line, the sanctioning body determined that because men run faster than women, the men she ran with allowed her to run faster. Since there are no world class women that can run faster than a world class man, men are at a disadvantage. Thus the title was stripped. Now, in world class marathons, women start 20 minutes sooner than men so men are given an equal chance to break their own records.

Today women – biological women – are facing another inequity in women sports: transgender women competing against us. Please understand, this is not about a person’s decision to change their identity. It is about the unfair advantage they bring when entering women’s sports.

Men are biologically different than women. Some believe this can be corrected by pumping hormones into their bodies and reducing their testosterone. They believe the advantage they have will be erased. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Stacy T. Sims, PhD, is an exercise physiologist and nutrition scientist who trains women athletes. In her book, *ROAR*, Dr. Stein contends women need to train as women because we are biologically different than men. Our body composition, muscle mass, bone structure, and lung capacity work differently when we exercise when compared to a man’s. Add in menstrual cycles, and our ability to perform at maximum capacity is compromised. Finally, our maximum oxygen use – critical to peak performance in every sport – is less than a man’s. Men have more muscle mass, stronger bones, larger lungs, and more oxygen to blood ratio.

Transgender women do not lose these attributes. While pumping hormones in to their bodies and reducing their testosterone levels may decrease their athletic performance, the reduction is slight and does not outweigh the strength in their ability to perform at maximum levels.

As a junior high cross country coach I see firsthand the advantage boys have over girls in speed. During my 22 years of coaching I have never witnessed a competition where the winner of the girls meet ran faster than the winner of the boys meet. Normally the winning male has outrun the winning female by a few minutes.

As an adult competitive runner I personally know the advantage men have over women in sports. Recently a male runner I used to train with has transgendered into a woman. If she shows up at a competition and runs as a women, more than likely she will beat me to the finish line. Is this fair?

It surprises me so many women athletes are afraid to speak out. I am grateful Martina Navratilova, a former world tennis star and legend, does not believe transgender women have the right to compete against biological women. To her it is a “form of cheating for transgender athletic players physiologically born as men to be allowed to participate in women sports”.

I am also grateful that Caitlyn Jenner, a transgender woman and former 1976 male Gold Medalist and Olympic star, feels the same way. She says it is a question of fairness. “That’s why I oppose biological boys who are trans competing in girls’ sports. It isn’t fair. And we have to protect girls’ sports in our schools.”

And we must protect our girls. Some of the girls I coached went on to win athletic college scholarships. Allowing transgender girls to compete against biological girls in high school is unfair. Connecticut High School track star, Alanna Smith has gained national attention with her lawsuit to ban transgender females from competition. When two transgender women show up at the start line in Connecticut, she finds herself finishing third instead of first.

Ms. Smith isn’t the only biological female faced with this unfairness. Every biological women faces the same discrimination. I have fought all my life for women’s equality. I now realize this fight is not over.

I ask you to pass HB 61. Not just for female athletes but for every biologically born women.

Thank you for your time today.