



Primary and Secondary Education Committee
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, Ohio 43215

TransOhio, Inc.
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December 13, 2022

RE: HB 151 sub bill, "Save Women's Sports Act" or the no trans girls allowed act - *oppositional testimony*

Dear Chair Andrew Brenner, Vice Chair Louis Blessing, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to address you on this important issue. My name is James Knapp. I am an attorney in the Cleveland area. And I am Chair of TransOhio, Ohio's first and largest state-wide trans equality organization. Founded in 2005, TransOhio is a trans-led group of volunteers dedicated to education, advocacy, support, and providing community to trans, non-binary, gender nonconforming people, and their allies. I have personally been involved with this nonprofit group for over a decade, and I have had the privilege to meet hundreds of young self-identified trans students in that time - some came from supportive households, others didn't; some had excellent experiences in school, but most struggled. Many are still struggling. And, if this bill passes, this body is guaranteeing that more trans students will suffer. Needlessly.

TransOhio opposes restricting access to athletic activities and other extracurricular activities. Prohibiting participation in school sports based on a student's "transgender status," including requiring that trans students prove their gender through birth records, is likely unlawful under federal Title IX. While OHSAA has had policies that allow tran student athletes to participate in school sports, and has since 2014, those policies are not perfect and should not be enshrined into law. OHSAA is a separate and private entity, and it should have the ability to adjust its policies in the future as it sees fit, and this bill would unreasonably limit that autonomy.

We would like to clarify some basic principles that seem to be confusing: *trans girls are girls*; they are not "biological boys" or "students of the male sex." Trans girls have been participating in solo and team sports in Ohio for decades. Trans girls are not a threat to cis (not trans) girls. In fact, trans athletes are part of the team.

This bill is poor sportsmanship. It's discriminatory. It's unnecessary. And it's unconstitutional.

We urge you to **vote no**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
James C. Knapp, Esq, Chair, TransOhio