

**Statement by Lori Lindsey, Olympic Gold Medalist and former member of the US National Women's Soccer Team  
before the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee  
in opposition to House Bill 151 & Senate Bill 132**

Dear Chairman Brenner and members of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee:

My name is Lori Lindsey and I am an Olympic Gold Medalist and former member of the US National Women's Soccer Team (USWNT). As a woman, as an athlete, and as a coach, I have faced many challenges to gender equity in sport, but I assure you transgender women and girls are not among those challenges. I am in strong opposition to House Bill 151 & Senate Bill 132.

I grew up in Indiana, and I've spent a lot of time all over the country playing soccer, including in Ohio. Sports were my entire life – and still are. Soccer saved me. For many transgender kids who are fighting depression, anxiety and suicidality, sports is a similar lifeline. Sport spaces help children develop critical life skills like communication, teamwork, and leadership — and give them a community of peers with whom they connect and can develop life-long friendships<sup>1</sup>. These spaces are imperative for all kids, no matter their gender. We should be finding ways to create more opportunities for kids to be active and engaged with their peers, not denying them access.

Despite being called the "Save Women's Sports Act," HB 151/SB 132 does not consider any of the actual challenges to women and girls in sport. I ask you – what have you done to protect young women and girls from sexual assault and harassment in sport? What have you done to ensure all institutions in Ohio are compliant with Title IX? What have you done to promote equal pay for women athletes? How have you fought for increased opportunities and resources for young women and girls in sport, especially young women and girls of color? This bill, like so many others across the country, is seeking to solve a problem that simply doesn't exist.

I have been at the frontlines of the fight for gender equity in sport for a long time, and I am sick and tired of transgender youth being cruelly targeted. And I'm not alone - hundreds of other elite women athletes – from Billie Jean King to Candace Parker – have consistently expressed loud opposition to bills identical to HB 151/SB 132.<sup>2</sup> And that is also why thousands of college athletes have signed letters supporting letting kids play sports with their friends and against discriminatory bills like HB 151/SB 132.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Turnidge, J., Côté, J., & Hancock, D. J. (2014). Positive youth development from sport to life: Explicit or implicit transfer?. *Quest*, 66(2), 203-217.

<sup>2</sup>For example, see:

[https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/press\\_release/billie-jean-king-megan-rapinoe-and-candace-parker-join-nearly-200-athletes-supporting-trans-youth-participation-in-sports/](https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/press_release/billie-jean-king-megan-rapinoe-and-candace-parker-join-nearly-200-athletes-supporting-trans-youth-participation-in-sports/);

[https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field\\_document/womens-groups-sign-on-letter-trans-sports-4.1.19.pdf](https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/womens-groups-sign-on-letter-trans-sports-4.1.19.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> For example, see: <https://www.athleteally.org/student-letter-ncaa-hb500/>;

<https://www.athleteally.org/college-athletes-demand-ncaa/>; <https://www.athleteally.org/athlete-ally-letter-trans-nonbinary-ncaa/>

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What does it say about you, about Ohio, that you would rather openly target and harass a vulnerable group of young people instead of actually listening to women athletes? This is not the Ohio I know and love.

**I urge you to protect women and girls in sport and oppose HB 151/SB 132.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lori Lindsey', with a stylized, cursive script.

Lori Lindsey  
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