

TRANSATHLETE.COM

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**Statement by Chris Mosier
Team USA Athlete & Founder of TransAthlete.com
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 Chris Mosier and I am writing in opposition to House Bill 151 and Senate Bill 132. I am a professional athlete and founder of TransAthlete.com, a resource devoted specifically to policies pertaining to the participation of transgender people in sports at various levels of play.

Transgender students participate in sports for the same reasons other young people do: to challenge themselves, improve their fitness, and be part of a team. Having the opportunity to participate in sports results in positive outcomes for all students - better grades, greater homework completion, higher educational and occupational aspirations, and improved self-esteem.

I know this first hand. I am a transgender man, but long before I understood and could tell others I am transgender, I grew up playing girls and women's sports. Sports was how I found my friends, my community, and my social life. Sports taught me about goal setting, communication, determination, perseverance, leadership, and supporting others. In high school, when I struggled with understanding my place in the world, sports quite literally saved my life. My participation in sports as a high school student-athlete shaped me into who I am today. That's why it's heartbreaking to see sports being used to as a weapon to harm transgender youth in Ohio.

Policies for high school athletes should focus on inclusion. While there are athletes who are very serious about their sports, the truth is high school athletics is not elite competition and it is not on the world stage. Therefore, the policies at the high school level should prioritize access and participation for all youth, regardless of how they identify, and should support their growth as students and people.

The best policies do this. In the nearly one decade of managing transathlete.com, I have seen more state high school associations adopt policies that govern where transgender high school student-athletes can participate. Ohio is among those states, where student athletes have been able to participate with their peers since at least 2013 - and you can count on one hand the number of students who have used this policy each year.

When bills like HB 151 and SB 132 pop up, we see that they are not linked to any clear problem in women's sports in Ohio, or any real documented threat to women in sports; instead, they are linked to stereotypes and myths about transgender people and driven by hate groups and lobbyists whose missions are to erase transgender people from public life.

The truths that no one supporting HB 151 and SB 132 wants to face is this: no transgender high school student is transitioning for athletic dominance. Girls in sports are not losing scholarship opportunities. And despite the fear mongering and false narratives by politicians right now, transgender athletes are not a threat to women's sports.

Let me clear about the damage this bill, and even this conversation will have: when government officials publicly debate the validity and worth of our existence as transgender people, the worth of athletes – of people – like me, it sends a dangerous message to young people that there is no safe or supportive place for them in this world. It also sends a message to people who are not transgender that they can and should ignore the basic humanity of transgender people in Ohio.

Trans kids just want to play sports with their peers.

I urge you to send a clear message that hatred, transphobia, and targeted attacks on young people will not be tolerated in Ohio. Please make your commitment to oppose House Bill 151 / Senate Bill 132.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Mosier', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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