

Amy Faul

Thank you for considering my concerns raised in opposition to House Bill 151 and Senate Bill 132, the Save Women's Sports Act. This dangerous legislation targets an already vulnerable group of Ohio youth and denies them the often life saving opportunity to participate in sports.

I write this testimony to ask you to please oppose the ban on transgender athletes. I have lived in Ohio my entire life, and although I don't describe myself as very athletic, I still grew up playing sports like gymnastics, swimming, horseback riding, track, and soccer. Throughout grade school I can trace back almost all of my friends to one of these sports. Sports were not only how I gained and maintained my friendships, they were also a way that I connected with my own family, playing similar sports to my brother, or having my parents or grandparents come support me at practices and meets/games. Playing sports was also an important way that I stayed healthy as a child, giving me the opportunity to be physically active, teaching me how to set and achieve goals, and how to recognize and celebrate personal and group achievements. These are just some of the benefits I know I gained from playing sports, if I had to list them all it could take forever.

I think my experience with transgender individuals would be similar to many others in Ohio. I was in college before I met any openly transgender individuals or even understood what it meant to be transgender. However, regardless of whether or not you know about or understand gender identities, the fact is that nobody should restrict kids from playing sports. Kids are kids, and I think we can all agree how important sports are to a childhood experience, even for someone like me who never identified as an athlete. The government has no right to take away that childhood experience from any child, for any reason. In doing so you will be preventing trans children from getting to meet new friends and build relationships not only with those friends but with their families as well. You are also jeopardizing the mental and physical well-being of those kids. Banning them from certain sports would further label them as "other" and tell them they don't belong in certain spaces. Kids get enough of that growing up from their peers, they don't need the government telling them they don't belong somewhere.

I urge you to oppose HB151 and SB132 and protect our state's athletes.