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**Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee
Dec. 13, 2022**

Written Testimony on HB 151

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Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on HB 151.

The Ohio School Psychologists Association, which represents more than 700 school psychologists across Ohio, has strong concerns with language added to this bill in the House that would negatively impact the ability of transgender children to participate in school sports.

School psychologists are guided by an ethical code that calls on them to respect the rights and dignity of everyone as well as a duty to do no harm. The National Association of School Psychologists' ethical standards require school psychologists to validate and affirm a young person's authentic lived experience, value their integrity, ensure their safety, and promote their well-being (NASP, 2020). School psychologists are ethically obligated to advocate for positive school policies and practices to protect the legal rights of students and parents (NASP, 2020, Standard IV.1.2).

To optimize transgender students' academic, social, emotional, behavioral, and development potential, schools must be safe, secure, equitable, and inclusive environments for all students. This legislation targets an incredibly small population of Ohio children who are both transgender and student athletes and discussion of this topic by itself has already caused harm to this vulnerable group of young people. Please consider how HB 151 would not only harm these few students but also their teammates who could be called out to prove their gender by anyone who seeks to bring such a challenge, as allowed for in the bill.

The National Association of School Psychologists issued a position statement that calls for inclusive participation on sports teams and other sex-segregated activities that correspond with their gender identity (NASP, 2022). We oppose the use of invasive medical examinations to confirm or challenge one's gender identity and we appreciate the removal of this language from the bill. We also oppose efforts to define "sex" as one's biological sex as a way of limiting participation by transgender students.

Barring outright rejection of this legislation, OSPA supports inclusion of the Ohio High School Athletic Association's policy on transgender student participation as replacement language for this bill.

Thank you for allowing us to provide testimony. We appreciate your consideration.



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References

National Association of School Psychologists. (2020). *The Professional Standards of the National Association of School Psychologists*.

National Association of School Psychologists. (2022). *Safe and Supportive Schools for Transgender and Gender Diverse Students*. [Position Statement].