



## **Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 6**

Dr. Ben Huelskamp

Chair Young, Ranking Member Miller, and honorable members of the House Higher Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in opposition to House Bill 6, otherwise known as “Enact the Save Women’s Sports Act.” My name is Dr. Ben Huelskamp, and I am the Executive Director of LOVEboldly, an Ohio faith-based nonprofit working to create spaces where LGBTQIA+ people can flourish in Christianity. My testimony today is rooted in my faith and in my understanding that people, including transgender people, are created in the image and likeness of God who loves them.

The Save Women’s Sports Act, despite its name, has little to do with women’s sports which are not under assault. Using women’s sports as a shield, HB 6 seeks to write discrimination against transgender women and girls into Ohio law. HB 6 is part of a larger narrative that argues that transgender women are nothing more than men dressing in women’s clothes for any number of nefarious reasons, including, in this case, gaining a competitive advantage in women’s sports which they might not have in men’s sports. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Transgender people in general are born into a world demarcated at nearly every juncture by gender lines. While knowing in their head and hearts that their gender identity is different than that which society and culture tells them, they are nevertheless forced to act out their assigned sex and its corresponding gender leading to staggering mental and physical dysphoria. They are assaulted with denials of the truth they know and are told to deny the very person that God has created them to be.

Rather than erect walls against the full participation of transgender people, we should be building communities which support these Ohioans. One way we can support trans youth and young adults is by allowing them to participate in sports on teams corresponding to their gender identity rather than their biological sex as assigned at birth.

Beyond the argument from fairness and basic humanity, HB 6 is unnecessary and redundant. The Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) as well as the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), and the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) have all implemented strict policies regarding the participation of transgender student-athletes. Allowing these independent associations to continue regulating participation is sufficient to ensure that no student-athlete has an unfair competitive advantage beyond their own athletic talent.

I urge you to reject House Bill 6 now and not allow it to move any further in the legislative process. Ohio should never be a place where we codify discrimination particularly against children and young adults.

---

*Creating and developing spaces for LGBTQIA+ people to flourish in Christianity.*

30 E. College Ave., Westerville, OH 43081 | EIN: 81-1869501

www.loveboldly.net | admin@loveboldly.net | 859.904.8056