

April 17, 2022

OH HB 6

Opponent Testimony

The Ohio Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee

Jyothika Yermal, Medical Student

Dear Chair Tom Young, Ranking Member Joseph A. Miller, III, and Members of the House Higher Education Committee:

My name is Jyothika Yermal and I am a first-year medical student at Case Western Reserve University **testifying in strong opposition of the *Save Women's Sports Act***. My testimony is strictly my own and does not represent any health care organization in the State of Ohio.

As a medical student, I have received formal education about the process of transitioning, and am well-equipped to understand the medical treatments that this sometimes entails. I am upset by the multiple bills in the Ohio legislature regarding transgender people's rights, as they are often **supported by factually incorrect ideas about the medical aspect of gender-affirming care**.

HB6, while not directly affecting medical care, is founded upon the idea that the trans girls that play on girls' sports teams have innate biological advantages that would undermine their cisgender teammates' success in the sport. However, there is OHSAA policy regarding the eligibility of trans girls who want to play on girls' sports teams, and this policy has been effective in ensuring these athletes do not "possess physical (bone structure, muscle mass, testosterone, hormonal, etc.) or physiological advantages over genetic females of the same age group". Additionally, only 3 girls have been approved by OHSAA to play this spring, making up a miniscule percentage of athletes in the state. These athletes have failed to win any awards or scholarships for their sports, so **the threat of trans girls hurting cisgender girls' competitiveness is wholly unfounded**.

Additionally, there are no provisions for how verification of biological sex at birth would be done. Without this specification, it could be anything from an invasive genital exam to hormone tests based on accusation or mandated for all athletes. In addition to being traumatic, this would create added expenses and logistical barriers for athletes and their families. Because some biologically female girls may have varying levels of hormones (such as those with genetic abnormalities or hormonal disorders like polycystic ovary syndrome), this could also prevent cisgender girls from playing in sports. As a former athlete on a girls sports team, **I would also like the committee to know that I would have had no qualms with a trans girl playing on the same team as me**. However, I can say with certainty that **if this bill had been enacted during my time playing lacrosse, I would have reconsidered my participation** due to fear of the implications of false accusations, and I know many past teammates who would have done the

same. In summation, this bill is both unnecessary and would pose **emotional and psychological harm to both trans and cisgender female athletes in Ohio**. I urge the committee to keep both of these athlete groups' best interests in mind and **vote NO on HB 6**.

Sincerely,

Jyothika Yermal

References:

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3. *Ohio lawmakers push to ban transgender athletes in female sports*. Ohio Lawmakers Push to Ban Transgender Athletes in Sports. (n.d.). Retrieved April 17, 2023, from <https://spectrumnews1.com/oh/columbus/news/2021/06/04/ohio-lawmakers-push-to-ban-transgender-athletes-in-female-sports->
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5. Staver, A. (2021, May 4). *Two Ohio bills would ban transgender girls from female sports*. The Columbus Dispatch. Retrieved April 17, 2023, from <https://www.dispatch.com/story/news/2021/05/04/ohio-bills-ban-transgender-girls-female-sports-teams-high-schools-college/4886735001/>
6. *Transgender policy - OHSAA*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 17, 2023, from <https://www.ohsaa.org/Portals/0/Eligibility/OtherEligibilityDocs/TransgenderPolicy.pdf>