

April 18, 2023
Carson Hartlage (they/them/theirs)
Opponent to HB 6

As a transgender person who has lived in Ohio for most of my life, including many years of competing sports, I **strongly oppose HB 6** and think that it should stop in committee. Participating in sports has been a major part of my life and has shaped me into the person I am today. Had this bill been passed when I was in high school or college, it would have negatively impacted me.

This bill does not seek to “save women’s sports” but rather to systematically exclude transgender and gender diverse athletes from competing in sports. There is no scientifically sound evidence that shows that allowing transgender student athletes to play on the team that fits their gender identity would affect the fairness of the sport or competition. A [report](#) released earlier this year studied trans women competing in elite-level sports from 2011 to 2021 found that there is no evidence that trans women have an advantage over cisgender (assigned female at birth) women in sports.

The bill's requirement to designate separate single-sex athletic teams based on the sex of the participants is discriminatory. Such a requirement would unfairly exclude transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals from participating in sports teams that align with their gender identity. Requiring transgender and gender-diverse athletes to compete on teams based on their sex/gender assigned at birth is the same as banning them from athletic competition entirely.

Moreover, the bill's authorization of civil action for those deprived of athletic opportunities or who suffer harm due to a violation of the bill's single-sex participation requirements may discourage schools and colleges from admitting transgender and gender-nonconforming student athletes or creating inclusive sports policies, out of fear of potential lawsuits. Likewise, the bill's prohibition of state agencies or political subdivisions, accrediting organizations, or athletic associations from taking adverse actions against schools, school districts, or colleges or universities that comply with the bill's single-sex participation requirements could lead to a lack of accountability for schools that discriminate against transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals. It could also undermine efforts to create inclusive environments in schools and colleges and promote diversity and acceptance.

Lastly, the bill undermines the authority of the NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA, and other sports institutions to make their own policies regarding transgender athletes. These regulations are outside the scope of the Ohio state government.

In conclusion, the "Save Women's Sports Act" will result in unnecessary discrimination against transgender and gender-nonconforming athletes in Ohio. Transgender women are being targeted by harmful bills such as HB 6 that seek to hinder their ability to compete in athletics. Instead of creating barriers, we should be working towards inclusivity and equal opportunities for all athletes and protecting the transgender community.