

To the Ohio House Primary and Secondary Education Committee: my name is Jennifer Wagner-Assali and I am a competitive cyclist supporting HB 61 Save Women's Sports Act. Thankfully I did not have to face the issue of males identifying as females in female sport categories when I was younger, but I have competed against several as an adult in the elite and masters categories of cycling. You won't hear from many women like me, because they are scared to speak out and say how they really feel. I get hundreds of private messages from women who are against this, but the fear of being called names such as "bigot" or "transphobic" prevents them from simply stating the truth.

If humans could actually change their sex, this would be a non-issue. Men could actually become a woman and there would be nothing to debate. They would play sports in their new category. However, we all know this is not the case. Humans cannot change their sex, and presenting oneself socially as the opposite sex does not change biological reality. Lowering testosterone is not a proxy for girl or womanhood.

Having to race or compete against a male is demeaning to women who have fought so hard to be able to compete fairly. We already often race shorter distances, win lower prize money, and compete at the less desirable time-slots compared to men. Now we also have to share the start line and podium with them, and these rules were made without asking us our opinion. If you try to protest, you are told, "these are the rules, deal with it" or told you're being discriminatory. However females are not strangers to discrimination, we know it is actually WE who are being oppressed in this situation.

I have lost out on prize money, a world championship medal, and dignity by being forced to accept this rule of allowing males in the female category. Many of my friends have experienced the same. I just can't imagine being a young girl right now getting into sport for the first time and being told this is the new normal. I may have not entered sports in the first place.

The science is clear- males retain physical advantage after a year of testosterone suppression, even more than biological females that take testosterone for a year! Please stand up for females and let us keep sports fair and safe for all the girls and women that will come after us. We deserve it.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wagner, MD