April 29, 2025

Dear Massachusetts Joint Committee On Education:

The Women's Sports Policy Working Group (WSPWG), Champion Women, and our allies call upon you to restore fairness for female athletes by voting in favor of H.737 and H.584 and any amendments that would prohibit all males from competing on female teams.

We are champion athletes, coaches, Title IX lawyers, and administrators**.** Our core members – Martina Navratilova, Donna de Varona, Nancy Hogshead, Donna de Varona, Mariah Burton Nelson, and Tracy Sundlun – have a combined 300+ years of expertise in women's sports. In our collection of research, we cite many other medical, legal, and scholarly experts.

Left: Can you tell which shot-putter on this girls' high school track team is male?
Right: Girls who competed against this boy on a high school track team sued.

A note about language: To understand what's happening to girls who are forced to compete against male athletes who identify as transgender… we use the word males. We mean no disrespect. Without accurate, sex-based language, the issue is difficult to understand.

Girls and women deserve a separate, all-female sports category because boys and men are bigger, stronger, and faster. ***This is why the female category exists***. Without it, you never

would have heard of us or other champion female athletes. The best high school boys in track and field routinely outrun Women Olympic Champions.

Therefore, laws that allow males to compete against girls or women are unfair for girls and women. ***Whereas, asking males who identify as trans to compete in the proper sex category is not unfair; it's the same requirement we make of everyone else.***

Male performance advantage is less obvious in children, but boys have a physical advantage then, too, as proven by one hundred years of swimming and running records.

Sports are organized based on objective criteria, not identity.

We respect people's rights to identify as transgender, including non-binary, genderqueer, and other gender identities, and to be addressed as they please.

However, sports are not organized by athletes' beliefs or their identities, but by bodies. A choice to identify as a gender is not the same as physical reality. And sports are physical contests.

While usually framed as a "transgender issue," only males are intruding in opposite-sex sports. Women who identify as trans stay in the women's sport category. Why? Because they are not good enough to compete against men. Which is precisely our point. Sex differences matter. Gender identities, for purposes of sport, do not. **The fact that girls and women who identify as trans do this by choice, without complaint, offers proof that male athletes could handle competing in the proper sex category, too.**

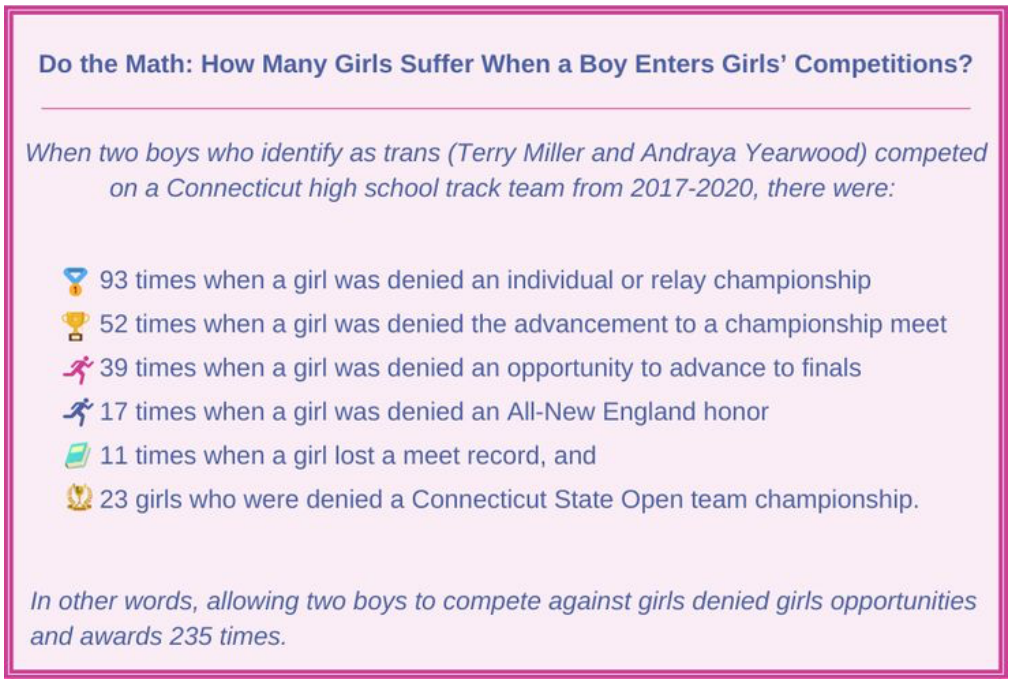
In a January 2025 poll of parents with children under age 18, 78 percent agreed that "males who identify as female" should not be allowed to participate on girls' sports teams. This was overwhelmingly true for Republicans (86%), and true for most Democrats (60%).

Clearing Up Misconceptions

1) **No one is proposing to ban anyone from sports.** Males can play in the male category. Those who identify as transwomen, transgirls, non-binary, gender nonconforming, gender fluid, or anything else would not be banned from sports.

2) **No one is proposing genital exams.** Sex verification happens early when a family physician signs a school-sports-participation form clearing a child to play sports. The form asks about a child's fitness (heart, lungs, vision) and sex. ***No genital exams are involved, unless you count newborns.*** If there is a challenge, an inexpensive, cheek-swab can be performed, as World Athletics is now requiring.

3) **One male is too many.** Even one boy on a girls' team can have a devastating impact on those girls and opposing teams. A male participant affects his team, the girl/s who were left off the team, girls' scholarship prospects, every opposing team and coach, all the fans and parents and referees, and more. The effect reaches far beyond one female's displacement, defeat, and humiliation. Men on women's teams impacts women in every sport category, and globally. One website has documented more than 11,000 instances of males participating in the female category -- which represents many lost opportunities, including almost 6,000 top-three finishes for girls and women.



4) **Title IX is a bipartisan law,** supported on a bipartisan basis in response to numerous challenges over the years. It's largely responsible for American female athletes' success – and it's based on sex-segregated, not gender-identity-segregated, categories.

5) **Sports equipment and rules in at least 41 sports are different for men and women.** Volleyball nets, for instance, are hung seven inches lower for women – because women are shorter. The male who played for San Jose State University's volleyball team last season – triggering boycotts by five universities – not only had an advantage with leaping, spiking, he was playing on a female-sized court.

6) **Male performance advantages cannot be erased via testosterone suppression or surgery.** Most trans athletes are not the "transsexuals" of old. According to the Washington Post, just 31% of trans-identified people take medication and just 16% have surgery. Gender identity is usually simply a matter of belief and chosen self-description, not physical alterations. But even physical alterations do not convert males into females. Women are not male minus testosterone.

Will you please support girls and women?

With much appreciation for your attention to our concerns and request,

The Women's Sports Policy Working Group

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