

CONCERNED
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LEGISLATIVE ACTION COMMITTEE

YOUNG WOMEN FOR AMERICA

Statement by Halli Gravley
Kentucky Female High School Athlete
Young Women for America Ambassador
Delivered February 15, 2022, at the Kentucky
House Standing Committee on Education Hearing on HB 23.

Thank you, Rep. Dotson, for presenting this bill and allowing female athletes like myself to share how much the integrity of women's sports means to us. My name is Halli Gravley, and I'm a current senior at Whitefield Academy and an Ambassador for Young Women for America. Young Women for America is a project of Concerned Women for America, the nation's largest public policy women's organization in the nation. As a female athlete in Kentucky, the importance and significance of keeping girls' sports for girls only is extremely important to me. Since I was eight years old, I have been a figure skater and have swum three seasons with the swim team throughout the past six years.

Just last week, I completed my senior year swim season. I finished middle school and high school sports without the trauma of being forced to compete alongside a male claiming to be a female. That is not a privilege. It is my right. If we do not take a stand today, girls across this state will not be afforded the same experience I was afforded.

Everything about how our sports are structured recognizes the uniqueness of men and women. If I am in a relay of four people and one of my teammates can't swim, we would never be able to throw in a male swimmer from our school to help us complete the relay. This is not fair. It gives our team an unfair advantage over the other female relay swimmers because men are biologically different. As a woman and an athlete, I cannot comprehend how someone's gender confusion changes this simple, scientific, and biological fact. If how we compete in sports and what team we are on is dictated by our feelings at that time, what prohibits the scenario I just explained from becoming a reality?

Lia Thomas, a male swimmer currently competing on the women's team for the University of Pennsylvania, first competed for three years on the men's team and ranked No. 462 nationally. Today, Lia ranks No. 1 and is crushing female athletes' times by 38 seconds. This is devastating for female athletes who have trained for years to beat records, place at championships, or even secure their spot on a collegiate team. Our academic futures and scholarships are on the line.

As an Ambassador for Young Women for America, I represent not only myself as an athlete but also young women across this state and this country who believe one of the most foundational truths that

has existed from the beginning of time – God created two distinct sexes, male and female. Allowing biological males to compete in women’s sports is an attack on science— on physical reality— and a betrayal of women's rights.

So, on behalf of the thousands of young women I represent, I’d like to take this moment to once again thank Rep. Dotson for including protections for female college athletes in this bill. As a high school senior headed for college after graduation, whether female athletes are protected at the collegiate level will factor into young women athletes’ decision-making. Will talented Kentucky athletes stay in this state to compete for titles, or will they be forced to head to another state in search of the fair opportunities they deserve? Women and girl athletes at every level of education deserve protection in sports and school facilities.

Every legislator must ask themselves if they will fight for true women’s progress or if they will stand by and watch as every shred of progress women have made in the past decades is erased by ignoring biological reality. This year marks the 50th anniversary of Title IX, and yet here I stand today, still having to defend my right, and the right of women across this state, to have a fair playing field and maintain the integrity of girls’ sports. This is not progress.