

OUR BODIES, OUR SPORTS

September 11, 2024

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Male Violence Against Women in Olympics

Dear Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Speaker Johnson, and Leader Jeffries,

Earlier this summer, we witnessed two men fighting women in a boxing ring at the Paris Olympic Games. On the largest stage in the world, at an event that should symbolize the best of humanity, male violence against women has become a sport.

Now we learn a 50-year-old male sprinter from Italy competed in the women's division of the Paralympic games displacing women Paralympians in their prime from competing or advancing on the largest stage in sports—another affront to all female athletes who have dedicated their lives to pursuing excellence in sport.

This should never have happened and should never happen again. *Our Bodies, Our Sports* coalition—women's rights organizations, feminist organizations, sports organizations, women Olympians and lawyers—sent a letter to the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) as it has failed to protect either women or the principle of fairness in sports by permitting men to compete in the women's category of sport. Our organizations are determined to end this cruel disregard for fairness.

U.S. leaders must continue to apply maximum pressure upon the International Olympic Committee (IOC), its corporate sponsors, and any other sport organization that has supported the IOC in condoning these unjust practices. The role of the USOPC must also be scrutinized. As the USOPC is a federally chartered organization, we ask that you use your oversight powers and convene a meeting of USOPC leadership to question its obligation and responsibility to protect the safety of female athletes and the fairness and integrity of sex-segregated competition.

We also urge the U.S. Congress to protect women boxers and all female athletes by showing bipartisan support for legislation that will protect women and girls in sport. In the U.S. Senate, there is a bill called the Protection of Women in Olympic and Amateur Sports Act (S.3729). This was introduced by Senator Tommy Tuberville and unbelievably, there are no co-sponsors yet in the Senate. We call on all U.S. senators to support this critical piece of legislation.

In the U.S. House of Representatives, a companion piece of legislation, H.R. 7187, introduced by Congressman Greg Steube has been reported out of the Judiciary Committee and awaits floor action. We urge the House to bring this bill to a vote.

The U.S. Congress must act in a bipartisan manner to protect women in Olympic and Paralympic sports and put an end to the violence and blatant disregard for women's safety that the world saw in Paris.

Sincerely,

Concerned Women for America LAC

Penny Nance, *CEO and President*

Independent Women's Forum

Carrie Lukas, *President*

Women's Declaration International USA

Elizabeth Chesak, *President*

Champion Women

Nancy Hogshead, J.D., *OLY
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May Mailman, *Director*

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Faith Ozenbaugh, *National Director*

Women's Liberation Front (WoLF)

Sharon Byrne, *Executive Director*

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Independent Council on Women's Sports

Kim Jones, *Co-Founder*

Marshi Smith, *Co-Founder*

International Consortium on Female Sport (ICFS)

Linda Blade, *Founding Member*

Independent Women's Voice

Heather Higgins, *CEO*

Independent Women's Network

Julie Gunlock, *Director*

