

I am a wife, mother, and a registered Democrat. My family has lived in Maryland for over 40 years and both my children were born in Towson, MD.

I am a former NCAA cross country athlete and a current cyclist with world and national medals. I was an athlete at Track Worlds in Los Angeles where the first trans-identified male was awarded a women's title and world record in 2018.

Policies that allow male competitors to claim awards and recognition meant for female athletes are wrong. The majority of Maryland constituents agree that the inclusion of male bodies in female sport is unfair. As an executive member of ICONS (The Independent Council on Women's Sports), not only have I personally experienced the unfair treatment and psychological warfare of being forced to compete alongside male-bodied athletes over the last eight years, I've been privy to tearful and dejected conversations with coaches, parents, school administrators and athletes when male-bodied athletes are allowed to compete in the female category. This "inclusion" model destroys athletic communities because it is inherently unfair to everyone involved. The world has enough evidence to state, without a doubt, that biological males have an immutable advantage (the latest evidence states this in pre-pubescent years) over biological females- we know because four world governing bodies of sport (World Athletics, World Aquatics, The International Cycling Union, and World Rugby) and multiple countries (notably The United Kingdom and Alberta, Canada) have utilized the skill, education and experience of experts and professionals in all fields to conclude this fact. Additionally, 'feelings' and 'captured language (language used that is not based on biology or reality but rather on individual feelings i.e. "transgender girl" when referring to a trans-identified boy who desires to be seen as female)' of an individual cannot be considered paramount if you are not equally willing to consider the feelings and emotional distress girls experience by being told they must concede to obvious and known unfairness in their athletic pursuits.

Categories exist in sporting competitions: for sex, weight class, AND age- we don't allow athletes to identify into an age category based on feeling older or younger- sex categories are the same. The male category exists as the "Open" category- The only way sport can be fair for women is with a protected female category that excludes competitors with male advantage.

I have two athletic children. My 11 year old daughter excels in soccer, taekwondo, and cycling. I have concerns of fairness and safety and feel dismayed at the inevitable decision we'll have to make if she continues her athletic pursuits with males. Just as families of female athletes all over Maryland are now experiencing, our decisions will be rooted in concerns for her physical safety, self-esteem and mental well-being. This doesn't happen in boy's sports. It's an injustice to girls.

When women and men speak up about this unfairness, they are accused of harassment and bigotry. For the better part of a year I had to defend myself to US SafeSport investigators because two trans-identified male cyclists accused me of “sexual misconduct and sexual harassment” for wearing a Save Women’s Sports shirt in competition. Organizations that were created to protect females are being used as social weapons to silence us. Providing fair policies that pertain to all athletes, as SB0381 will do, is the only way to ensure fair and meaningful competition for females in Maryland athletics.

Let us not forget that adolescent girls are still the most vulnerable members of our society. Last year NPR published a piece where they stated 1 in 3 teen girls report having contemplated suicide compared to 1 in 5 identifying LGBTQ+ teens. How dare we, as a society, add to the burden of girls the unfair and irresponsible inclusion of males in their sports?

Some of the most famous and well-known trans-identified athletes are biological females who compete in the female category at the professional level because they know that biology determines an athlete’s success (not identity). Nikki Hiltz is the American female record holder for the mile, and though Hiltz does not identify as female, biologically Hiltz is female and competes (without performance enhancing testosterone) with females. Equally so, celebrated Canadian soccer olympian silver medalist, Quinn, is also a biological female who finds success within the female category. Trans-identified athletes who are born female, are welcomed into female sporting categories. Trans-identified athletes who are born male, should equally be welcomed into male sporting categories. There is no room for hate or intolerance, simply fairness in sport. These are the types of policies that we should emphasize because that is truly how we show our society is great.

Parents, coaches and athletes know that biological differences between males and females are so great that unless we defend the protection of a female sport category, those who do not possess that advantage will basically disappear from sport.

Bodies play sports, not identities.