



STATE REPRESENTATIVE **KRISTINA SHELTON**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rep. Kristina Shelton: Statement on Assembly Floor Session

MADISON – Today, the Wisconsin State Assembly met in regular session and discussed two bills led by Republicans to determine team participation in athletics at both the University and K-12 levels by gender assigned at birth. Rep. Shelton (D-Green Bay) released the following statement in response:

“Prior to coming into the Legislature, my passion was engaging with youth through physical activity as a physical education teacher. I had the power to challenge the unsaid rules of who sports and athletics were traditionally for and provided inclusive, purposeful, joyful opportunities for all kids. In my classroom, in my gym, everyone belonged. And that’s why this bill makes me so angry. Because there are so many educators, parents, organizations, and athletes working to make sure that kids -- *all kids* -- can just play.

“To deny the opportunity to just play to students who are already at risk, is not only discriminatory, it is life threatening. As soon as our children leave us in the morning, and until they return to our arms at the end of the school day, they are in the care of our teachers and school staff. To ask our educational leaders to enforce this legislation is cruel - this would direct them to treat the children of Wisconsin in ways that would threaten their wellbeing and their lives.

“In the intention of lifting up women and empowering their voices in sports, the message is clear. The WIAA, NCAA, and numerous other athletic organizations have written policies about this issue that protect all athletes and promote equity and inclusion. These national leaders tell us plainly - trans men and women belong here, and they deserve to be protected. To enact this legislation would be to create a division and manufacture a problem that does not exist, and would do so at the expense of young trans lives.

“As a legislator, teacher, and mom, I can’t protect kids from getting hurt all the time. But I can say, without a doubt, that the Wisconsin State Legislature should not be one of the things that causes children harm. Our trans youth deserve better from us, and I will always seek to defend and protect them wherever I can - from my own gym to the State Legislature.”

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