



Good morning to the members of the Assembly Committee on Education. I am Abigail Swetz, my pronouns are she/her, and I am here as the executive director of Fair Wisconsin, Wisconsin's only statewide LGBTQ+ civil rights and political advocacy organization. I am also here as a former middle school sports coach, a current mom, and an athlete and fan of women's sports. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition of Assembly Bill 100.

Fair Wisconsin opposes this bill because it is bad for trans girls, because it is bad for all girls, and because sports should be about teamwork and life lessons in collaboration.

This bill would negatively impact trans girls, and our trans youth in Wisconsin need encouragement to participate in sports, not the opposite. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey, administered by DPI in partnership with the CDC, delves into physical health by asking students to share the number of days in the past week that they have been physically active for at least an hour. In 2023, for cisgender youth (youth whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth), that number was 4.2 days of exercise in the past seven days. For trans youth, it was 2.7 days. I have included this data analysis in my submitted testimony.

We know from study after study that physical activity is good for physical and mental health, and we know from the YRBS that like other youth, trans students who play sports report a stronger sense of school belonging and improved well-being compared to their peers who do not play sports.

This bill would also negatively impact all girls. Examining trend data on girls' participation in sports from 2011 to 2019, the data indicates that states with trans-inclusive sports policies held steady in participation, while states with bans on trans athletes saw a decrease in girls' participation in sports after enacting bans. This was determined through an analysis of national YRBS data done by the CDC that was cited in an article by the Center for American Progress, but when I clicked on the citation link to find a graph to share with you, the CDC gave me a "page not found" error due to the scrubbing of trans-related content from federal agency websites.

Fair Wisconsin also has serious concerns about the implications this bill has on the privacy and safety of all girls. While there are numerous processes established by this bill detailing how to litigate if a trans athlete does play in sports, there is no mention of any processes that would be in place to guarantee that enforcing this bill would not invade the privacy of all girls and would not require them to answer invasive questions about their bodies or subject them to physical exams. I ask the committee to consider this omission, especially as experiences in other states with similar legislation point to

this bill becoming an invitation for people to question the gender of any female athlete they choose, for whatever reason they choose. Considering this, I'm not surprised that participation in girls' sports in states with trans athlete bans has gone down.

We all want sports to be fair, for athletes to be safe, and for kids to have the opportunity to learn important values like perseverance, dedication, and most of all, teamwork. To that end, we should be encouraging all kids to play sports instead of passing legislation that would actually depress participation in girls' sports.

As a middle school coach, the focus is always on access to playing and building a close-knit team that supports each other. I had the luck of coaching middle school ultimate frisbee, so I got to talk about the "spirit of the game" a lot because ultimate frisbee is a self-refereed sport and the "spirit of the game" is how we all worked together to follow the rules and reach consensus on calls. The best part of self-refereed sports is that the rulings are made by the people closest to the game - the athletes and the coaches - and that is something I also appreciate about how sports regulations are usually handled, by local sports associations close to the coaches and players. I very much disagree with the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association's recent ruling against trans female athletes participation in sports. I also think the WIAA, with a Board of Control made up of school district staff, is a more appropriate governing body to make any decision about regulations for school sports, not politicians in a legislature.

For all of these reasons - the negative impact on trans girls, the negative impact on all girls, concerns about enforcement, and the need for sports regulations to be determined by sports associations - Fair Wisconsin urges you to vote *no* on AB 100. Although to be honest, I don't think any of those is the most important reason to vote *no*. The most important reason is the smile on the face of the 14-year-old trans girl running out onto the soccer field, because at its core, we all know that youth sports is not about scoring the most goals. It's about the joy of playing the game.

Thank you.



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P.O. Box 2102, Madison, WI 53701-2102
(608) 441-0143 | www.fairwisconsin.com