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# BARBARA DITTRICH

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 38<sup>th</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

## Assembly Committee on Education Testimony on AB 377 October 4, 2023

Good Morning Committee Chair Kitchens and members of the Assembly Committee on Education. I appreciate you hearing AB 377 so that Wisconsin women's voices will be heard today. Taking everyone back to when I originally introduced this legislation in 2021, I decided to propose the "Protecting Women in Sports Act" bills, consisting of both K-12 and collegiate level athletics, because of the pleadings of parents whose daughters were competing in sports in my district. As I quickly learned when I agreed to be their champion in the legislature, there is a whole army of women in Wisconsin sports that are fed up with giving their titles and awards to those who were born biological males. Those women along with historic groundbreakers for women's rights in Wisconsin testified on the bills in 2021. These women worked hard and earned accolades in their own right, and they still deserve to have their Title IX rights protected.

What is this Title IX we keep hearing about? On June 23, 1972, Title IX became ensconced in federal civil rights law. That law was historic in its provisions honoring and protecting the abilities and achievements of women in their own divisions in competitive sports. Prior to that time, females were not offered the opportunities to compete in anything other than informal activities, lacking equipment, resources, and scholarships. Since its passage in my youth, Title IX has made a way for women to be inspired by the high achievement of other women. Educational and competitive opportunities have been opened up through scholarships and tournaments.

Now, in a fractured, well-meaning attempt at inclusion, women's achievements have once again been put at great risk of loss. By biological males being permitted to play on women's teams because of gender identity, biological females are once again losing opportunities at titles, scholarships, and even participation. Additionally, by ignoring the scientific, biological fact that males have higher bone density, greater muscle mass, and often greater height, women are being put in physical danger of greater injury in competition.

In fact, much has happened in these past two years since I first introduced this legislation. First off, with a wider public awareness of this issue, Marquette University Law School's latest poll on the matter learned that, "Views concerning sports competition for transgender athletes find a majority, 71%, in favor of requiring that transgender athletes compete on teams that match the sex they were assigned at birth, not the gender they identify with, while 28% are opposed to this." Back in 2021, people really hadn't heard the name "Lia Thomas," the trans swimmer who didn't even finish in the top 10 as a male but who stole the top seat from Riley Gaines, who had

worked a lifetime to achieve that top spot in swimming. Since that time, a young lady named Payton McNabb has literally been sidelined by a transgender player who spiked the ball during a high school volleyball game. McNabb received head and neck injuries leaving her with headaches, partial paralysis, and impaired vision that make her unable to now play the game at the collegiate level. A transgender athlete injured three female rugby players in April of 2022. In March of this year, Sun Prairie School District had an incident where a student claiming to be trans disrobed in front of showering freshmen females in their locker room. I could continue.

The good news is that many are coming to their senses seeing that something needs to be done to protect and revere females. Unlike many who would like to deny settled biology, we CAN define what a woman is — an adult human female with two XX chromosomes. FINA, the world's top international swimming association has put restrictions on biological males swimming in women's categories. The International Rugby League announced in 2022 that it was developing a new policy regarding transgender athletes and suspending biological male competition in the female category. In July of this year, UCI, world cycling's governing body banned biological males from competing in the female category if they transitioned after puberty. And just like this proposed legislation, the Boston Marathon created a 3<sup>rd</sup> category for competition, a "non-binary" category for transgender and non-binary athletes in 2022.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is a fair way to let everyone have their opportunity to engage and compete in athletics without an unfair advantage. When even members of the LGBTQ community like Martina Navratilova and Caitlyn Jenner, both having won multiple awards for their athletic performances, along with a number of brave doctors say that it's wrong for transgender women and girls to compete in female sports, we need to wake up! When a female basketball is smaller than a male basketball, we should be foolish to think hormone treatment or surgery can change the advantage of an individual's hand size. We CANNOT go back to the days where women were deprived of their equal participation and deprived of the respect they deserve. And at a time where we are all so concerned about trauma and mental health, why are we traumatizing the vast majority of our female athletes like this when it is within our power to peaceably solve this problem in a fair way for all?

My fellow legislators, this is not a matter of transphobia, hate, or any of the false pejoratives thrown at women who wish to stand up for women in sports. This absolutely not a "BAN" as the extreme left has tried to claim. This is a matter of equality and justice. Despite the fact I have transgender acquaintances whom I love does not mean that I need give them the right to steal my competitive accomplishments. That is known as overcompensation. This legislation is a matter of fairness based on facts that cannot be changed by the opinions of special interest groups. This legislation is not, as many have said, exclusionary and putting people into boxes. It is giving us an "ALL" category, ensuring that those who may not fit into their birth category have a home to foster their love of their sport with everyone.

I know there are those on this committee who will not listen, no matter what the facts are. Nevertheless, with my testimony is a handout for all of you on the immutable physiological differences between females and males that exist beyond any medical treatment or procedure. Those facts cannot be denied. Just like it cannot be denied that this transgender dilemma never seems to impinge upon men's sports.

Colleagues, this challenge has only grown worse since last legislative session. Let's work together to create a fair place for everyone. I want to thank the committee for their time in hearing this bill today. I am happy to answer your questions.

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## SOURCES

Testimony AB 377

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October 4, 2023

1. Title IX <https://www.justice.gov/crt/title-ix>
2. Views concerning sports competition for transgender athletes find a majority, 71%, in favor of requiring that transgender athletes compete on teams that match the sex they were assigned at birth, not the gender they identify with, while 28% are opposed to this.  
<https://law.marquette.edu/poll/2023/05/24/new-marquette-law-school-poll-national-survey-finds-trump-and-desantis-leading-biden-in-head-to-head-matches-desantis-losing-ground-to-trump-in-primary-majorities-having-unfavorable-views-of-all-thr/>
3. Doctor's statement on Lia Thomas' unfair advantage <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10868453/Mayo-Clinic-doctor-confirms-trans-swimmer-Lia-Thomas-given-unfair-advantage.html>
4. Payton McNabb injury <https://nypost.com/2023/04/21/nc-volleyball-player-urges-transgender-ban-for-schools-female-sports/>
5. Rugby players injured <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/watch-transgender-rugby-player-slams-female-athletes-coach-says-three-injured>
6. Sun Prairie incident <https://www.nbc15.com/2023/04/21/sun-prairie-schools-disputes-claims-girls-locker-room-incident/>
7. FINA decision <https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/19/us/fina-vote-transgender-athletes/index.html>
8. International Rugby League decision <https://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/sports/transgender-athletes-barred-from-international-rugby-league/3741978/>
9. UCI decision <https://www.dailywire.com/news/another-international-sport-bans-biologically-male-trans-athletes-from-competing-against-women>
10. Boston Marathon decision <https://www.reuters.com/lifestyle/sports/boston-marathon-feature-non-binary-category-2023-race-2022-09-13/>
11. Tennis legend Martina Navratilova slams transgender cyclist's race win  
<https://mol.im/a/12048543>
12. Caitlyn Jenner says transgender girls in women's sports is 'unfair'  
<https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/caitlyn-jenner-says-transgender-girls-women-s-sports-unfair-n1266138>



# FAST FACTS SPORTS

The strongest 10% of females can only beat the bottom 10% of men in hand grip tests.<sup>28</sup> Hand grip is one of the most widely-used markers for **strength**.



Men are **faster** than women. In running, swimming, rowing, kayaking, and short distance and long distance, women's speed world records are all about 90% of their



men's speed world records.<sup>29</sup> Each year, **hundreds** of men easily beat the world's best time in the women's marathon.<sup>30</sup>

Men have broader shoulders, and larger feet and hands, all of which grant an **advantage** in sports like volleyball, swimming, and basketball.



Male marathon runners have **lower body fat** percentages than female marathon runners.<sup>31</sup>



Men have a greater amount of fast twitch muscle fibers, which give men



**explosive power**.<sup>32</sup>

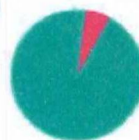
On average, men are physically stronger than women.<sup>33</sup>

Men have **66%** more upper-body muscle than women,

and **50%** more lower-body muscle.<sup>34</sup>



There is a **10%** performance gap between male and female athletes in most sports and it hasn't narrowed as women train harder.<sup>35</sup>



Men have **higher hemoglobin levels**, allowing their body to oxygenate muscles more quickly and efficiently.<sup>36</sup>



Men have **larger hearts and lungs**. A larger heart can pump more blood to the body and larger lungs allow for the body's tissues to receive more oxygen.



Men have bigger and stronger bones. A larger skeletal structure means men's bodies can hold **more muscle** and **larger bones** facilitate leverage.<sup>37</sup>



Men are **taller**, giving them an advantage in sports like basketball or volleyball.





WISCONSIN STATE SENATE

**DAN KNODL**

STATE SENATOR • 8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

**Assembly Bill 377**

Public Testimony

Assembly Committee on Education

October 4, 2023

Thank you Chairman Kitchens and members of the committee for holding this public hearing on Assembly Bill 377.

Assembly Bills 377 and 378 will preserve gender-specific sports categories at the high school and collegiate level, based on the athletes' biological sex, while allowing for the creation of co-ed sports teams. This will ensure that all athletes have equal access to athletic opportunities and fair recognition based on their talents and efforts.

Over 50 years ago, Title IX brought fairness and opportunity to organized sports, which are built on the principle of fair and safe competition. The movement to open female sports to biological males raises legitimate concerns about the inherent physical advantages that males tend to possess. These include differences in muscle mass, bone density, metabolism rates, and lung capacity, which are already emergent by early adolescence. This disparity increases the risk of injury and threatens to diminish the achievements of biological women if traditional gender-specific sports categories are not preserved. Indeed, this has already happened, as you will soon hear in further testimony from people affected by this policy.

Allowing biological males into female sports largely defeats the purpose of Title IX, and changing this arrangement becomes a serious matter when it limits opportunities for female athletes to succeed and advance in their chosen sports.

This legislation has broad bipartisan support in the public. In my 2023 summer survey, I asked constituents the question, "Should someone who is born a biological male be allowed to participate in girls' sports?" An overwhelming 73% of respondents said "No." This aligns with other public polling in Wisconsin and nationwide.

In today's debate about inclusion in athletic competition, we cannot ignore concerns related to fairness, physical advantage, and the preservation of opportunities for female athletes.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this proposed legislation. Representative Dittrich and I would be happy to take any questions you may have.



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 7882 • MADISON, WI 53707-7882

**To:** Assembly Committee on Education

**From:** Senator Mark Spreitzer, Senator Tim Carpenter, Representative Greta Neubauer, and Representative Lee Snodgrass

**RE:** Assembly Bill 377

**Date:** October 4, 2023

Chair Kitchens and committee members:

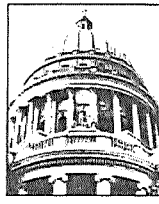
As members of the Wisconsin Legislative LGBTQ+ Caucus, we are submitting written testimony today in opposition to Assembly Bill 377. We ask that our testimony be shared with all members of the committee, and be entered into the committee record for this bill.

This bill discriminates against transgender students in Wisconsin by denying transgender girls the opportunity to participate in girls' sports. All young people should have the opportunity to participate in school-sponsored athletics consistent with their gender identity.

Categorical exclusion of transgender girls from participating in school sports alongside their peers is harmful because it singles out transgender youth and denies them the opportunities provided by organized sports and being part of a team. Studies have shown that participating in youth sports can lead to lifelong, positive impacts on a child's physical, mental, emotional, and social health. In addition to helping students stay fit and build physical activity into their lives, youth sports allow students to develop deep and lasting friendships with their peers. Athletes learn life skills such as empathy, leadership, perseverance, and teamwork that will help them throughout the rest of their lives. We know that access to youth sports is crucially important to every student's success.

Athletes across our state already compete under existing policies that ensure a level playing field for all students, and banning transgender girls from participating in sports consistent with their gender identity undermines those efforts. The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) already has policies related to the participation of transgender youth in sports, and is committed to ensuring that transgender youth have equal access to compete in sports.

This bill also likely violates federal law. In 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Bostock v. Clayton County* that federal bans on sex discrimination must be read to prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender identity. This means that where the federal government bans discrimination on the basis of sex, it also bans discrimination against transgender people. The U.S. Department of Education is currently



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 7882 • MADISON, WI 53707-7882

engaged in federal rulemaking to make clear that categorical, one-size-fits-all restrictions on transgender students participating in organized school athletics violate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

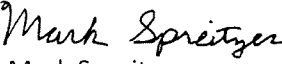



Assembly Bill 377 was previously introduced in the 2021-2022 legislative session as 2021 Assembly Bill 196. Last session, members of this committee heard hours of testimony from those who shared how this bill would discriminate against and stigmatize kids in Wisconsin. Kids, parents, teachers, coaches, and others shared last session – and will share again this session – how the introduction of this bill is harmful and ostracizing to members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Although this bill will not become law in our state, its reintroduction alone is harmful. Recent national surveys have shown that 86% of transgender and nonbinary youth reported negative impacts to their mental health from the introduction of anti-transgender bills, with nearly 1 in 3 LGBTQ+ young people stating that their mental health was poor “always” or “most of the time” due to anti-LGBTQ+ policies and legislation.

Assembly Bill 377 would further stigmatize and isolate transgender kids, who are already vulnerable. A recent national survey by the Trevor Project found that half of transgender and nonbinary young people seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year, and a 2022 study in the Journal of Interpersonal Violence found that 86% of transgender youth reported suicidality with 56% reporting a previous suicide attempt. This bill will put the physical and mental health of transgender youth in Wisconsin at risk.

We ask that you not schedule Assembly Bill 377 for a vote. If AB 377 comes before you for a vote in this committee or on the Assembly floor, we ask that you vote no. This bill is deeply harmful, unnecessary, and dangerous. We hope that you will join us in telling transgender and nonbinary youth in our state that they are seen, are loved, and that they belong here in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

			
Mark Spreitzer	Tim Carpenter	Greta Neubauer	Lee Snodgrass
State Senator	State Senator	State Representative	State Representative
15th Senate District	3rd Senate District	66th Assembly District	57th Assembly District





# DAVE MAXEY

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 15<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

*Testimony before the Assembly Committee on Education*

*Representative Dave Maxey*

*October 4, 2023*

Chairman Kitchens and esteemed members of the Assembly Committee on Education, I appreciate the opportunity to provide my testimony in strong support of Assembly Bill 377, which aims to uphold the principles of Title IX and protect the integrity of women's sports.

Title IX, a landmark civil rights law enacted in 1972, was established to ensure that women and girls have equal opportunities to participate in educational programs and activities, including athletics. It was grounded in the fundamental recognition of biological differences between men and women, and its purpose was to eliminate discrimination against women in sports, among other areas. The "Save Women's Sports Act" we are discussing today aligns with this biological science and preserves the essence of Title IX.

As a father, I do not want my daughters to have equal opportunities in athletics ripped away from them by allowing biological males to participate in women's athletics.

One of the core objectives of this legislation is to safeguard equality and preserve the athletic excellence of female athletes. It recognizes the essential distinction between male and female athletes based on their biological sex, as determined by a physician at birth and reflected on their birth certificates. This definition has been accepted throughout history and respects the original intent of Title IX.

Furthermore, Assembly Bill 377 also acknowledges the need to create a safe and competitive environment for all athletes, regardless of their gender identity. It accomplishes this by categorizing sports into three distinct groups: male, female, and co-ed. This inclusive approach ensures that every athlete, whether male, female, or non-binary, competes in a category that not only respects their biological composition but also provides them with the safest and most competitive platform.

Recent public opinion surveys, such as the Marquette University Law Poll from March 29, 2023, indicate strong support for this approach, with 70% of respondents in favor of athletes participating on teams aligned with their assigned gender at birth. Additionally, the U.S. House of Representatives passed HR 734, the Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act, to protect the integrity of women's sports.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I look forward to your support and recommendation for the passage of this bill.



## WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

TO: Representative Joel Kitchens, Chair  
Members, Assembly Committee on Education

FROM: David Earleywine, Associate Director for Education

DATE: October 4, 2023

RE: Support for Assembly Bill 377 School Sports Participants

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The Wisconsin Catholic Conference (WCC), the public policy voice of the Catholic bishops of Wisconsin, appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony in support of Assembly Bill 377.

This bill impacts public schools, private schools participating in a parental choice program, and independent charter schools by requiring that any interscholastic, intramural, or club athletic teams or sports designate the athletic team or sport as falling into one of three categories based on the sex of the participating pupils: 1) participants who are males, men or boys; 2) participants who are females, women, or girls; 3) coed or participants of both sexes. The bill defines “sex” as the sex determined at birth by a physician and reflected on the birth certificate. The bill also requires the educational institution to prohibit a male pupil from participating on an athletic team or in an athletic sport designed for females. Lastly, the bill requires the educational institution to notify pupils and parents if it intends to change a designation for an athletic team or sport.

Pope Francis has said that “The Church is interested in sport because the person is at her heart, the whole person, and she recognizes that sports activity affects the formation, relations and spirituality of a person.” However, while every person should be given the opportunity to take part in sport, it does not follow that every team must be open to all who wish to join, especially when basic fairness and dignity are at stake.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has affirmed that “[i]n education and in sports, we must seek to avoid anything that debases human dignity, including rejection of a person’s body or unequal treatment between men and women. This has particular relevance in athletics, where male competition in activities designated for women and girls can be both unfair and, especially in high-contact sports, unsafe. It is true that some women have excelled in these events with men. But any time a policy facilitating such male competition takes an athletic opportunity away from a female, it is a loss for basic fairness and the spirit of Title IX.”

As Catholics, we believe that every human being is made in the image and likeness of God and is deserving of dignity, respect, and compassion. We know that each person has been given a natural body that is either male or female. And we affirm, as Pope Francis has written, that “[t]he acceptance of our bodies as God’s gift is vital for welcoming and accepting the entire world as a

gift from the Father and our common home, whereas thinking that we enjoy absolute power over our own bodies turns, often subtly, into thinking that we enjoy absolute power over creation.”

We know that some will feel hurt by this legislation. Even as we support this bill and urge its passage, we ask everyone to see each other as members of one human family. We need to listen to one another and to search for ways that bring about unity and mutual respect.

Thank you for your time today.



PO Box 750  
Madison, WI 53701  
ffrfaction.org

October 4, 2023

The Honorable Rep. Joel Kitchens  
Chair  
Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Education

Re: Testimony in opposition to A.B. 377

Dear Chairman Kitchens and Committee Members:

My name is Ryan Jayne and I am Senior Policy Counsel with the FFRF Action Fund (FFRF AF), testifying in opposition to A.B. 377, which prohibits transgender female school athletes from playing in female sports. The FFRF Action Fund is an arm of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, a Madison-based national nonprofit with more than 40,000 members across the country, including more than 1,700 members in Wisconsin. We work to ensure that our laws remain secular in order to protect the constitutional separation between state and church.

I testified in front of this committee against a very similar bill in 2021, and very little has changed since then. The bill's sponsors seemed convinced that transgender girls were on the verge of ruining K-12 girls' sports, and yet that problem remains as nonexistent today as it was then. Allowing transgender girls to compete at the elementary, middle, and high school levels has not led to records being shattered or to a spike in injuries, as we were promised would be imminent if this bill were not signed into law in 2021.

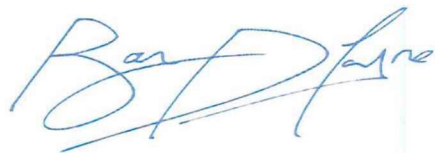
Also unchanged is the bill sponsors' phony concern for K-12 girls' sports. Ask yourself, have those legislators also sponsored a slew of other bills related to girls' sports, or does their interest in the topic only emerge every two years when there's a chance to exclude a disfavored minority of Wisconsin children? When your only interest in the topic is to ostracize and demonize transgender kids, you should at least have the integrity to admit that your purpose is to fearmonger about trans kids, not to improve girls' sports.

Perhaps the greatest actual issue in girls' sports today is falling participation rates. To deal with that, the priority should be to encourage *more* girls to participate. Trans girls deal with enough abuse from people whose worldviews have been poisoned by oversimplified, unscientific, typically religiously based views on gender, and supportive teammates can be life-saving, besides the myriad other benefits of playing K-12 sports. Excluding this class of girls is the exact opposite of what this body should be doing.

This bill undermines the purpose of public school athletic programs and creates problems while solving none. This is the wrong body to address these concerns, with the wrong rule, and for the wrong reasons. The mendacious concern of transgender girls ruining K-12 female sports has been a top priority of Christian nationalists for years now, and it is now beyond dispute that a total ban on transgender girls playing in girls' sports at the K-12 level, where the vast majority of athletes care more about participation than record-setting, is not needed.

If you do actually care about protecting Wisconsin girls and protecting K-12 girls' sports, please show that by voting against this bill. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Ryan D. Jayne  
Senior Policy Counsel  
FFRF Action Fund



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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF ASSEMBLY BILL 377  
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2023  
JULAIN K. APPLING, PRESIDENT**

Thank you, Chairman Kitchens and committee members, for the opportunity to testify on Assembly Bill 377. Wisconsin Family Action supports this bill.

Assembly Bill 377, the K-12 version of the Protect Women's Sports bills would protect girls' athletic opportunities by ensuring that only biological females can compete in female sports contests in our state's K-12 public schools and private schools participating in a Parental Choice Program. Without this bill, biological males, who have distinct physiological advantages over girls, can unfairly compete for girls' athletic titles and opportunities—causing girls to lose out on opportunities meant for them.

**Protect Women's Sports is based on the idea that sports should happen on a level playing field. Letting biological boys play in girls' sports is decidedly *unfair*.**

*Males have numerous physiological advantages that make it hard or impossible for even the top female athletes to compete against. That's why this bill ensures that only girls play in girls' sports.*

Biological males have greater bone density, muscle mass, and cardiovascular capacity than girls. This remains true even after males have undergone hormone treatment. Often, their physiological advantages remain unchanged or decrease only slightly. Even when their advantages like muscle mass decrease slightly, this may be overcome through proper training.

The bill's concept is supported by field experts. A similar bill (now law) in Idaho was sponsored by a former NCAA basketball player and Division I coach. As a coach and athlete, she brought this bill forward because she knew from experience that female athletes deserve fair competition—and that female athletes compete in their own divisions for a reason.

Female athletes deserve fair competition – and that means the chance to maintain women's categories distinct from co-ed or boy's/men's categories. As proof, consider that the world record for the men's 100-meter dash, set by Usain Bolt, is 9.58 seconds. The world record for women, set by Florence Griffith-Joyner, is 10.49 seconds. Females have never broken what's referred to as the 10 second barrier, while Olympic male finalists consistently break that barrier.

Further, In Connecticut, three female high school track stars are embroiled in a federal lawsuit over a policy that allowed biological boys to compete in girls' sports. While the girls were formerly top high school runners, two biological males entered as girls and took their athletic titles and opportunities to compete at a higher level. As a side note, in an action related to this case, the Department of Education clarified that the problematic policy was a violation of Title IX.

WIAA rules state that “a male-to-female student needs to have a year of testosterone suppression therapy in order to play on a female team.” However, such testosterone suppression doesn't really make a significant difference. Researchers at the Karolinska Institute and University of Manchester concluded that after one year of treatment “the physical advantage enjoyed by biological males over females is only minimally reduced when testosterone is suppressed...Furthermore, the reductions observed in muscle mass, size, and strength are very small compared to the baseline differences between males and females in these variables.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Emma Hilton, Ph.D. and Tommy Lundberg, Ph.D. (13 May 2020). University of Manchester, UK. and Karolinska Institute. Department of Laboratory Medicine/ANA Futura. Division of Clinical Physiology. Huddinge, Sweden. Retrieved from:  
[https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/a69528e3-c613-4bcc-9931258260a4e77f/downloads/preprints202005.0226.v1%20\(1\).pdf](https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/a69528e3-c613-4bcc-9931258260a4e77f/downloads/preprints202005.0226.v1%20(1).pdf).

**Allowing biological males to compete in girls'/women's sports enables them to take elite opportunities meant specifically for biological girls/women.**

Eligibility rules are a part of sports. Athletes must wear legal equipment and uniforms, in-state competitors need to attend a school in that state, and there may be age or grade requirements. These rules make sure that athletes play in the right category, and that they're not playing with an unfair advantage over their opponents. Likewise, it's only fair that to play in girls'/women's sports, you need to be a biological female.

One of the world's top marathon runners, Paula Radcliffe, shared these sentiments when the Boston Marathon changed its rules to open qualifying times to biological men who identified as women. Radcliffe, who for several years held the female world record time for a marathon, noted that the Boston tournament is exceptionally difficult to get into as it is, and allowing biological men to take women's slots would make it even harder for women to enter.

**Allowing males in female sports defeats the very purpose of Title IX: equal opportunity for biological women – and not letting biological males steal biological females' opportunities.**

*Women's sports is a hallmark achievement of Title IX. When males compete in women's sports, that threatens achievement opportunities for Wisconsin women.*

Title IX ensures that no one can be denied equal access educational opportunities on the basis of sex. Imagine a world where Simone Biles or Katie Ledecky were relegated to a recreation-only team or a competitive team with far less opportunity than the comparable men's team.

Before the creation of Title IX, that was the world in which many women lived. Even for talented athletes, as women they wouldn't have the same opportunities. Their teams might lack funding, they might be relegated to a recreation-only team, or sometimes they might not even have a girls' team on which to play. According to the [Women's Sports Foundation](#): "Before Title IX, one in 27 girls played sports. Today that number is two in five."<sup>2</sup> With the dawn of Title IX, women could finally compete on a level playing field against other women, with similar opportunities as men. Historically, Title IX has been used to advance women's opportunities. Now, some want to use Title IX as a justification to let biological men steal those very opportunities.

Certainly, the situation University of Kentucky swimmer Riley Gaines found herself in when swimming against a biological male is well known. Gaines has been willing to speak up for the many other women who are not as fearless as Riley Gaines.

**The concept of the bill is widely supported and is commonsense.**

Protect Women's Sports aligns with public opinion. Recent [polling done by the Women's Liberation Front, a feminist organization](#), shows that most Americans – including majorities of Republicans, Democrats, and independents – agree that female athletes should not be forced to compete against biological men.<sup>3</sup> Similar legislation has already been passed in 23 states—showing real Americans very much care about this issue and want to preserve girls' sports for their daughters and granddaughters.

Wisconsin has the opportunity to do the right thing and protect girls' and women's sports. Now is the time to be fair to the girls and women who work hard to hone their athletic talents so they can excel in the sport or sports of their choice.

Thank you for your attention and thoughtful consideration of our position on this proposal. Wisconsin Family Action urges you to support this bill and recommend it for passage by the full Senate.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/education/title-ix-and-the-rise-of-female-athletes-in-america/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://womensliberationfront.org/womens-sports>

## CIVIL RIGHTS & LIBERTIES SECTION

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To: Members, Assembly Committee on Education  
From: Civil Rights & Liberties Section, State Bar of Wisconsin  
Date: October 4, 2023  
Re: AB 377 – prohibiting transgender females from participating in K-12 women’s sports

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The State Bar of Wisconsin’s Civil Rights & Liberties Section opposes AB 377, prohibiting transgender female athletes from participating in sports designated for women in public or private K-12 schools.

In *Bostock v. Clayton County*, the US Supreme Court interpreted discrimination against transgender individuals as sex discrimination. Based on that decision, and subsequent interpretation and application, the Civil Rights & Liberties section believes this legislation violates the Equal Protection Clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment as it would discriminate against transgender female athletes.

In addition, the Section believes excluding any students from participating in athletic events consistent with their authentic gender is harmful and stokes anti-transgender fears. Defining a person's sex as that which is determined at birth by a physician is outdated and has no scientific basis. Further, sex determined at birth tells nothing about the athletic ability of the players.

Evidence shows that transgender females do not have an inherent advantage over cisgender females. The reality is that there are hundreds, possibly thousands, of trans women competing in sports, yet only a handful have had any success at the high school level. Women’s sports have continued to grow and thrive in states with policies that allow trans student athletes to compete. There is no evidence that any legislative action is necessary to maintain a level playing field. Moreover, since 2018 the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association has had guidelines in place for allowing trans student athletes to compete consistent with their authentic gender, so this proposed legislation is both unnecessary and serves no actual purpose.

Lastly, major medical and mental health associations have found that affirming trans youth in their gender is a critical part of improving physical and mental health outcomes for this population. Therefore, this legislation would be damaging to trans youth, by disaffirming their gender.

For these reasons, the Civil Rights & Liberties section opposes AB 377.

For more information, please contact our Government Relations Lobbyist, Lynne Davis, [ldavis@wisbar.org](mailto:ldavis@wisbar.org) or 608.852.3603.

*The State Bar of Wisconsin establishes and maintains sections for carrying on the work of the association, each within its proper field of study defined in its bylaws. Each section consists of members who voluntarily enroll in the section because of a special interest in the particular field of law to which the section is dedicated. Section positions are taken on behalf of the section only.*

*The views expressed on this issue have not been approved by the Board of Governors of the State Bar of Wisconsin and are not the views of the State Bar as a whole. These views are those of the Section alone.*



STATE BAR OF WISCONSIN





WISCONSIN COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

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## Testimony

To: Members of the Assembly Committee on Education  
From: Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA)  
Date: October 4, 2023  
Re: Assembly Bill 377  
Position: Oppose

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The Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA) appreciates the opportunity to offer this written testimony for your consideration. WCASA is a hybrid organization: functioning both to support member Sexual Assault Service Providers (SASPs), while advancing the anti-sexual assault movement in the state and nationally.

Transgender girls participate in college sports for the same reasons as everyone else: to improve overall health and fitness, to be part of a team, and to foster friendships and sense of belonging. Furthermore, studies have demonstrated the benefits of girls participating in sports, including enhancing leadership skills and self-confidence<sup>1</sup>. When we tell transgender girls they cannot play girls' sports, they miss out on these important experiences and all the lessons they can teach.

25 states have inclusion policies that allow transgender athletes to play sports alongside their peers. Furthermore, the NCAA, the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and USA Gymnastics have also adopted similar policies. Banning transgender girls from participating in K-12 girls' sports teams puts Wisconsin out of step with all these efforts.

Ensuring girls' athletics is on a level playing field is an important goal. That is why laws like Title IX have been so important when it comes to girls' sports. If we want to meaningfully support girls' athletics at the K-12 level, we should focus our efforts on increasing investment in women's coaches and strengthening Title IX to protect female athletes from harassment and abuse. Banning transgender girls from participating in sports does nothing to address these issues.

Furthermore, transgender girls vary in athletic ability just like cisgender athletes. Some girls excel at soccer, some at volleyball, and some at gymnastics. Simply put, there is no reason why a person's genetic makeup and reproductive anatomy should be an indicator of athletic performance.<sup>2</sup> According to Dr. Joshua D. Safer, "There is no inherent reason why [a transgender woman's] physiological characteristics related to athletic performance should be treated differently from the physiological characteristics of a non-transgender woman."<sup>3</sup> We should not discriminate against girls and ban them from playing sports because they are transgender.

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<sup>1</sup> Hinkelman, L. (2016) *The Girls' Index: Girls and Sports Impact Report*. Columbus, OH: Ruling Our eXperiences, Inc. Final Girls & Sports Impact Report (squarespace.com)

<sup>2</sup> Strangio, C., & Arkles, G. "Four Myths About Trans Athletes, Debunked." [www.aclu.org](http://www.aclu.org), April 30, 2020. [www.aclu.org/news/lgbtq-rights/four-myths-about-trans-athletes-debunked/](http://www.aclu.org/news/lgbtq-rights/four-myths-about-trans-athletes-debunked/)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

This legislation also compounds the discrimination transgender people already experience in their daily lives and sends a dangerous message that they are not welcome on sports teams. For example, transgender people experience higher rates of bullying, anxiety, and depression<sup>4</sup>, all of which will be exacerbated if they are not allowed to participate in sports because of their gender identity. Furthermore, transgender women and girls face discrimination and violence that make it difficult to stay in school. For example, 22% of transgender women who were perceived as transgender in school were harassed to such an extent that they had to leave school because of it.<sup>5</sup> These data contradict the notion that transgender girls have an unfair advantage when participating on women's sports team. Furthermore, forcing transgender girls to participate on teams that do not align with their gender exposes them to range of serious negative impacts. This includes gender dysphoria and continually being mis-gendered, which increases the risk of suicide, self-harm, and bullying.

Transgender people are also disproportionately impacted by sexual violence, as nearly half of all transgender adults report experiencing sexual assault<sup>6</sup>. Those rates are even higher for Black and Native American transgender people, who thus experience intersecting discrimination and violence related to race and gender identity/expression<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, this bill is rooted not just in transphobia, but also racism, as the main cases cited by proponents of similar legislation across the country involve two young Black women athletes in Connecticut. Black women in sports have long been subject to racist depictions about their femininity or been accused of cheating in an effort to keep them from competing. Instead of focusing efforts on preventing transgender athletes from participating in sports, we would be better served by ensuring they are treated with dignity and respect by welcoming them K-12 sports teams.

For the reasons state above, WCASA opposes AB 377, and we urge this committee to take no further action on this legislation. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, you can reach me at [ianh@wcasa.org](mailto:ianh@wcasa.org).

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<sup>4</sup> Turban, Jack L. "Research Review: Gender Identity in Youth: Treatment Paradigms and Controversies." *The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. October 2017.

<sup>5</sup> James, S.E., Herman, J.L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi, M. (2016). *The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey*. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Transgender Equality.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

Chair Kitchens, Vice Chair Dettrich, and members of the committee,

My Name is Matthew Lehner. I am a leader and activist from Eau Claire Wisconsin where I additionally have the honor and privilege of serving my fellow students at the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire as a Student Senator. Today I rise in strong opposition to Assembly Bill 377, a bill that will effectively ban trans athletes from participating in K12 sports.

Well folks, same crap, different committee room. Another day in Madison. Another day of this illegitimate, out of touch gerrymandered Republican majority attempting to pass homophobic and transphobic pieces of legislation directed at the thriving and vibrant community of queer young people that call our state home, a community which I am damn proud to be a part of. I should be in school today, but I simply can't stay at home and allow you all to attack my community

But, friends, why should we be surprised? After all, this Republican majority hasn't been working to solve our problems. Nothing of substance, just pieces of legislation that attempt to address their chronic obsessions with the private parts of young people. And, consider the source... one of the authors and the vice chair of this very committee equated folks participating in pride in the park in Watertown to the Neo Nazi's who showed up to intimidate people at the event in the tweet.

This bill, similarly to Assembly Bill 378, is incredibly transphobic, hurtful, and misguided for a number of reasons. It again contains several times the transphobic trope of prohibiting "males from participating in female sports"... I've said it once but I'll say it once but I'll say it again, you all must think we are dumb. We all know what this means and the transphobic nature of it. And There is no designation for non-binary people which is no surprise, and similarly again to Assembly Bill 378, the gender of that sport an individual wants to join must reflect the sex assigned at birth on the birth certificate, which can only be amended through a court procedure, and only if the person has gone through a sex reassignment procedure, which you guys want to outlaw in Assembly bill 465. God you guys know how to make my head hurt.

I'll end by saying this, because again; same crap, different committee room. I know, it might blow your close minded republican brains to bits but here I go: Trans men and boys are men and boys. Trans girls and women are women and girls. It doesn't matter what policy or bill you write or what you try to do to change reality. This will always be the truth. I'm proud to stand on the right side of history today. No matter how upset or triggered it makes you. I know you won't, but please vote down this misguided bill, and start working to solve actual problems that the people of Wisconsin face, and for God's sake let kids be kids, but again I know you won't do that either.

Thank you for your time and attention

Sincerely



Matthew Lehner

Student Senator at the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire

October 4, 2023

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Christina Mitchell  
Canton, Connecticut  
Testimony in support of AB 377  
Wisconsin Committee on Education

My name is Christy Mitchell, and I am the mother of three female athletes from Connecticut. Soccer, basketball, and track have been a huge part of our lives from the time our girls were just little. My oldest daughter was a Division III track and field athlete. My youngest daughter is a senior in high school and a varsity soccer and track athlete. They are talented athletes who work hard and love to compete.

My middle daughter, though, has proven herself to be an exceptional athlete. Chelsea was among the best sprinters in New England during her high school years. Those years, however, were marked with controversy, stress, and heartbreak. In 2019, despite being the first female finisher in the 55m, 100m, and 200m at the Connecticut state championships, Chelsea was deprived of the gold medals and state titles she had earned in those races. That recognition went to a male instead.

The Connecticut policy, which categorizes sports participation by gender identity instead of sex, has been devastating for female athletes. I have stood alongside the track and watched as two males were awarded girls' state championship titles 15 different times. One of the males went on to win seven New England championship titles. This athlete had competed on the boys' team for the three prior seasons and did not even rank in the top 100 among male sprinters in our state. The sudden switch to the girls' team in 2018 brought this male a stack of gold medals and championship titles.

The female athletes from our region worked hard to be the very best at their sport – yet they were deprived of fair competition, the thrill of victory, and the honor of being a champion. They missed out on media interviews and recognition of their accomplishments that they rightfully deserve. And they couldn't inform college coaches that they had just won a championship title. These things matter to a young girl, as do the scholarships and career opportunities that can flow from that success. I can promise you this: losing the state championship to a male four times – that mattered to my daughter.

Hello members of the Assembly Committee on Education,

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My name is Susan Neeley, and I am a resident of Evansville. I've lived in Wisconsin for my entire life and my children were born in Wisconsin and are being raised right here in Wisconsin. I represent GSAFE as their Director of Youth Programming and Family Engagement.

I urge you to vote NO on Assembly Bill #377. As a Wisconsinite, I am opposed to this bill because every child deserves the benefits of participating in sports with their schools and their peers. Studies have shown that participation in sports improves academic potential, improves mental health, improves emotional regulation, helps children make friends and build connections to their communities, helps children understand teamwork, helps them build leadership skills, helps develop motor skills and coordination, keeps them exercising and developing healthy habits, and overall, builds a foundations for a whole and healthy life.

I don't believe politicians should interfere with personal, private decisions that should only be made between parents and their children. If passed, this bill will cost lives. At a time when LGBTQ+ youth are already struggling with harassment, discrimination, and mental health, we should be making it clear that they are safe and welcome in Wisconsin. We should support healthy activities for them to participate in and to feel safe to show up as their whole selves. Stripping away something that a child needs for their mental and physical health, will cost lives.

Benjamin Lebovitz

128 S Hancock St. Apt 2  
Madison, WI 53703

October 4, 2023

### **Assembly Committee on Education**

Good morning Committee Chair Kitchens and members of the Assembly Committee on Education. I strongly oppose Assembly Bill 377.

My name is Benjamin Lebovitz, and my pronouns are he/they. I am educator, a proud National Board Certified Teacher, former high school coach and gender and sexuality advisor, and current Ph.D. student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where I study educational leadership and policy analysis.

I am upset by both the content of this bill and the nature of this process, presenting “both sides” of a topic as if support for this bill would not restrict and erase the very identity of trans and queer youth. Support for this bill misinterprets medical research and twists language under the guise of “protection”, and yet we know that queer and trans youth in Wisconsin, as a direct result of hostile policies such as this one, brave unwelcoming school environments that contribute to negative physical and mental health outcomes. As educational institutions aim to foster environments of belonging, I denounce this restrictive proposal in its effort to further discriminate against trans and queer youth in our state.

And yet, Representative Dittrich 2021’s failed Assembly Bill 196 just over two years ago, a text that mirrors today’s proposal in both substance and language. What has changed, to make this committee believe today’s proposal is more likely to be passed into law? I am reminded of a common phrase which questions the logic of “doing the same thing over and over again while expecting different results”. Apparently, the political process doesn’t rely on logic.

In reviewing 2021’s failed legislative proposal, I wanted to share some striking findings: Of 179 speakers who submitted materials in the *last* committee hearing, only nine spoke in support of the bill, including the bill’s sponsor and two state representatives. 170 individuals spoke out strongly *against* the proposal to restrict athletic sports teams in schools. Today’s committee hearing indicates the strength of resistance to this bill has not waned.

I am inspired by those who have prioritized make their opposition to this bill known, and would particularly like to champion the voices of youth today. Whether speaking or in attendance, their participation in this process is a treasure. While this bill affects their immediate educational rights and environment, this bill and this hearing promote the value of their voice in this (un)democratic process. I implore you to welcome these voices in the same way I ask you to welcome trans youth in schools, by making clear that everyone has a place, a voice, a right to be heard, and a right to participate. Discrimination, exclusion, or silencing any group, especially trans youth, undermines the very foundation of our values. Let us listen, understand, and act out of compassion and with justice for *all*.

Benjamin Lebovitz



## WISCONSIN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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October 3, 2023

Chairman Kitchens and members of the Assembly Committee on Education:

The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) would like to express our concerns and opposition to proposed AB 377.

WIAA staff works with its 500+ member schools and its Sports Medical Advisory Committee (SMAC), comprised of 12 medical professionals, collaboratively to develop standards and practices to promote a safe, healthy, inclusive, and positive environment for Wisconsin's student athletes.

The WIAA membership of public and private schools has had an existing policy related to transgender athlete participation since 2015. This policy has been professionally developed over time, has worked in practice, receives regular review, and has the support of the member schools. While the WIAA staff and the member schools encourage thoughtful and open dialogue on how to improve policies, we do not support a legislative end-run around membership processes.

As a private, not for profit association, the WIAA will object to any legislative action which circumvents the well-established processes of the membership.

We encourage legislators to vote against AB 377.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Hauser  
WIAA Executive Director



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## WISCONSIN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

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an NEA affiliate

### Memo

To: Members, Assembly Education Committee

From: Wisconsin Education Association Council

Re: Testimony in opposition to AB 377, designating athletic sports and teams operated or sponsored by public schools or private schools participating in a parental choice program based on the sex of the participants.

Date: October 4, 2023

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The Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC) represents teachers and other public school employees in every part of Wisconsin. As professionals on the front lines of public education, WEAC members are committed to working with parents, administrators, and school boards to promote safe, healthy, and effective learning environments.

Educators work every day to ensure all students are safe and supported so they can learn – no exceptions. Bills such as AB 377 harm queer and transgender youth, worsening for many an already declining state of mental health. About four in 10 LGBTQ+ students say they have considered suicide in the past year, and the pain inflicted on families and loved ones of those who attempt or commit suicide is everlasting.

Wisconsin public school educators have long advocated for increased mental health services in schools, including personnel such as school nurses, psychologists, social workers and others to identify and intervene when youth are struggling. Equally as long, we have opposed any effort to single out any group of students through targeted legislation outlawing opportunities. Students, rightly so, see efforts by legislators to place a wedge between students in their schools as another in a long line of personal attacks by bullies. Attacking youth for their sexuality will not make them change who they are.

Instead of spending time devising laws to marginalize students, Wisconsin's public school educators urge you to embrace solutions for bringing them together. Please reflect on your personal motivation for supporting or rejecting this legislation. Are you standing for inclusion and protection of your constituents who only want to be accepted for who they are and what they can contribute to their college team?

As educators, we will never condone bullying and will do everything in our power to make sure trans and gender non-conforming youth know they are seen, heard, and valued.

We invite committee members to join us in our stand. Please reject AB 377.

Peggy Wirtz-Olsen, President  
Bob Baxter, Executive Director



*Dear Members of the Education Committee:*

*My name is Brian Juchems. I am the Co-Executive Director of GSAFE, a statewide organization that works with schools, students, and families to create safe and affirming environments for LGBTQ+ youth.*

*GSAFE strongly opposes AB 377, the newest attempt to ban trans athletes from participating in school sports. It is harmful and creates divisions in our schools and communities.*

*Transgender and non-binary youth athletes play sports for the exact same reasons as other students their age: staying healthy, being part of a team, and fostering friendships – all lifelong benefits of playing a sport. When we tell transgender girls that they can't play girls' sports – or transgender boys that they can't play boys' sports – they miss out on this important childhood experience and all the lessons it teaches.*

*Like other students, some transgender and non-binary youth turn to sports as an affirming space. Preventing them from participating sends a dangerous message to all youth about not being welcome or wanted, and increases risks to their physical and emotional wellbeing.*

*The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association policy provides guidance to school districts across Wisconsin, and balances the concerns of safety and inclusion for all athletes. All our kids, regardless of their gender, deserve to be able to play on sports teams in Wisconsin. It's that simple.*

***If passed, AB 377 would cost lives.*** Combined with other bills being considered today and that have been proposed by members of this body, it is nothing short of an attempt to eradicate the transgender

*community and roll back the gains that have been made in LGBTQ+ social acceptance and lived equality over the past several decades.*

*But even if AB 377 and the other bills don't become law, the mere introduction and consideration of anti-LGBTQ+ measures such as these has been proven to have a direct, detrimental impact on the mental health of LGBTQ+ people – particularly our queer and trans youth.*

*Bills like AB 377 also create a climate where students who have played on teams together for years are emboldened and encouraged to turn on each other, singling out teammates who don't quite fit the mold of the "right kind of girl" or the "right kind of boy", making them feel unwelcome and unwanted.*

*We need to do better.*

*My message to you is simple. **Stop playing games with the lives of transgender Wisconsinites.***

*To trans youth in Wisconsin schools, your families, and the educators who seek to provide you with reliable support despite increasing obstacles, please know that GSAFE will continue to fight for you and oppose legislation like this at every step.*

*We are proud of you and see you and will work for a Wisconsin where you are loved, affirmed, and get to play. We are not backing down. We will always bring our A game and be Allies to you. We know that our team - our community - is strong because you are a part of it. Strong teams - strong communities - cannot succeed when they settle for bringing their B game, standing as silent bystanders when others engage in harm.*

*Brian Juchems  
Madison, WI 53714*



WISCONSIN COUNCIL  
OF CHURCHES  
COURAGE. TRUTH. HOLY IMAGINATION.

30 W. Mifflin, Suite 602  
Madison, WI 53703

To: Members of the Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities  
From: Rev. Breanna Illéné, Director of Ecumenical Innovation and Justice Initiatives,  
Wisconsin Council of Churches  
Date: October 4, 2023  
Re: Testimony in opposition to Assembly Bill 377

The Wisconsin Council of Churches (WCC) is a network of Christian churches and faith-based organizations committed to working together across our many differences to promote collective good. We connect 21 Christian traditions, which have within them approximately 2,000 congregations and over one million church members. Exercising holy imagination, we help one another make courageous choices that lead toward peacemaking, social and economic justice for Wisconsin's most vulnerable residents, the vitality of the church, and the well-being of our neighbors.

As a Council, we have adopted a statement on Nonviolence that reminds us that "Faithfulness to its mission requires the Church to speak out against violence, minister to its victims, and work tirelessly to reduce the level of violence in society." We come here today to decry the violence in AB 377.

Transgender individuals are unnecessarily under attack, and this legislation is just one of many items currently before our state legislature that cause undue harm to a marginalized community. The isolation and demonizing that this bill promotes are spiritually harmful and empower hate speech and hateful action. Transgender individuals are children of God who deserve a dignified existence.

While it may seem strange to have a group of churches and people of faith speaking on sports, the reality is that we share some commonalities. Sports teams, just like our churches, are meant to be shared spaces to bring people together and build people up. They create community and provide outlets for health, wellness, and collaboration. This bill fails to do any of those things and does quite the opposite. It creates needless division and punishes our young people simply for being who they are in the world.

Our faith teaches that God is relentless in pursuit of well-being for the world and its inhabitants. As Christians, we are called to facilitate communities of well-being, and public policy that does not harm. In this spirit of love and accountability, we reject AB 377 on its merits, and we ask this body to do the same.

Thank you for your time.



# Women's Declaration International

Testimony of Kerri Bruss  
Before the House Education Committee  
Wisconsin Assembly Bill 377  
October 3, 2023

## SUPPORT

Thank you, members of the House Education Committee, for allowing me the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Assembly Bill 377. My name is Kerri Bruss and I reside in Waukesha County, Wisconsin.

Women's Declaration International (WDI) is a global, nonpartisan group of volunteer women dedicated to protecting women's sex-based rights. WDI USA is its U.S. chapter. WDI is based on the Declaration on Women's Sex-Based Rights, which has 35,000 signatures globally. WDI USA urges you to support this bill on the basis of Article 7 of the Declaration, "Reaffirming women's rights to the same opportunities as men to participate actively in sports and physical education," an Article which is consistent with Article 10 (g) of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), as well as with the Title IX Education Amendments of 1972.

In recent years, there has been an incursion of men and boys into women's and girls' athletic competitions on the basis of so-called "gender identity," a linguistic mechanism by which men and boys claim the identity of women and girls. This claim has no basis in observable material reality.

The provision of single-sex sports is necessary if women and girls are to have opportunities that are on a par with those of men and boys. As Eric Vilain, a professor of human genetics at UCLA and consultant to the IOC medical commission has noted, "We separate men and women into categories because we want women to be able to win some competitions. There is a 10% to 12% difference between male and female athletic performance." Significant differences in the average bone density, heart size, lung volume, hemoglobin levels, and muscle development of men and women, among other physical differences, result in men being able to generate higher speed and power during physical activity. Even after two years of testosterone suppression, males retain physical advantage over females, especially when it comes to speed.

If sex segregation in sports continues to be eroded, more and more women and girls will lose their spots on teams and podiums to males. This is in direct opposition to Title IX, as well as common sense and the principles of fairness in athletic competitions. It is fairness – a level playing field – that must prevail over arguments about the inclusion of males as females, if women's and girls' sports are to exist as legitimate competitions. I urge you to support this bill and help save women's sports in Wisconsin.

Kerri Bruss  
Signatory to the Declaration on Women's Sex-Based Rights  
Country Contact WDI USA

## NASW WI TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO 2023 ASSEMBLY BILL 377 BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION ON OCTOBER 4, 2023

Chairperson Kitchens and members of the Assembly Committee on Education.

My name is Marc Herstand, I have served as Executive Director of the National Association of Social Workers Wisconsin chapter for the last 31 years.

I am speaking in opposition to Assembly Bill 377, which would ban transgender youth from participating in K-12 sports teams.

During the 2019-2020 legislative session, Speaker Robin Vos established a Task Force on Suicide Prevention, which held statewide hearings and developed legislation to help address the high suicide rate in Wisconsin. During the 2013-2014 legislative session, Speaker Vos established a Task Force on Mental Health. This Task Force also held statewide hearings and developed legislation to help address unmet mental health needs in Wisconsin.

The Covid-19 pandemic has greatly exacerbated already high levels of suicidality, mental health and substance abuse in our state that were examined in these early Task Forces. Our current Legislature and Governor have begun taking steps to address these very challenging conditions.

Unfortunately the impact of 2023 Assembly Bill 377 would undermine these important efforts and increase suicidality, depression, anxiety and other mental health challenges among transgender youth in our state. Transgender young people face greatly increased rates of suicidality, depression and bullying compared to other children. More specifically an analysis of data from the 2017 and 2019 Youth Risk Behavior State and Local Survey showed that almost 44% of transgender youth, versus 16 percent of cisgender youth, reported considering suicide in the previous year. Almost 30% of transgender youth had made at least one suicide attempt compared with only 7.3% of cisgender youth. 59.4% of transgender youth compared to 33.5% of cisgender youth reported feeling sad or hopeless in the previous 12 months. 50% of transgender youth reported feeling bullied at school or electronically compared to 23% of cisgender youth. 34.6% of Transgender youth reported that they skipped school due to safety concerns in the past 12 months compared to 9.3% of cisgender children and 28% of transgender youth compared to 7% of cisgender youth were threatened or injured with weapons on school property in the past 12 months.<sup>1</sup> These bills will further stigmatize these children and contribute to the already high levels of mental health distress and suicidality faced by transgender children.

In addition to the negative impact of Assembly Bill 377 on the mental health of transgender youth, there is absolutely no evidence that there is a problem in Wisconsin of transgender girls putting non-transgender girls at a disadvantage. In a state of 5.9 million people, advocates for this legislation have been unable to find more than a few cases where a transgender girl actually won a race. The reality is that very few transgender youth actually participate in athletics. And when cases are cited invariably these cases don't hold up to evidence. One example promoted by one of the legislative advocates for this bill, reported by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel in a front-page article on May 11, 2021, is of a 28-year-old transgender woman who won a 50 kilometer race a year ago. The non-transgender women who came in second strongly objected to the assertion that she came in second because the other runner was transgender. According to the MJS article, she stated, "How could they be co-opting something for me that is pure joy" It's kind of harsh someone is trying to leverage me and painting a picture as if I'm upset or

mad about coming in second, which happens all the time. Emma was having a good day and I was having a bad day".<sup>2</sup>

I would also like to mention that for high school athletes participating at the highest level of competition, the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) already has a policy governing participation by transgender youth. There is absolutely no need for the State of Wisconsin to get involved with this policy.<sup>3</sup>

Young people of all sexual orientations and gender identities learn many important life lessons in sports: leadership, confidence, self-respect, self-discipline and working as a team. No child should be denied the opportunity to participate in sports, simply because of who they are. We should not discriminate against kids and ban them from playing simply because they are transgender.

Please reject this bill that is not needed to solve any problem in our state and that will further stigmatize transgender youth in our state who are already facing huge levels of suicidality, depression and mental health distress.

Marc Herstand, CISW MSW  
Executive Director  
National Association of Social Workers, Wisconsin Chapter

1. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbtq-rights/reports/2021/02/08/495502/fair-play/>
2. "Bills banning trans athletes stir debate in Wisconsin" Milwaukee Journal/Sentinel, Tuesday May 11, 2021
3. <https://www.wiaawi.org/Portals/0/PDF/Eligibility/WIAAtransgenderpolicy.pdf>

October 4, 2023

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Testimony in Support of AB 377, Committee on Education  
Independent Council on Women's Sports (ICONS)  
[www.iconswomen.com](http://www.iconswomen.com)

Members of the Committee on Education,

The Independent Council on Women's Sports submits this testimony in strong support of AB 377.

ICONS is a network and advocacy group comprised of current and former collegiate and professional women athletes, their families and supporters who believe the next generation of women and girls deserve the chance to be champions and to see an expanded and celebrated world of women's sports. Our network spans all levels of sport and includes hundreds of Olympians and professional athletes, high school and collegiate athletes, parents of young girls, and coaches and administrators. Our goal is to protect the female category for every girl, at every level, in every sport.

Recognizing biological differences between the sexes and protecting women's spaces from male intrusion are foundational for women to succeed in sports and in life. Laws giving women and girls the opportunity to take part in and succeed in sport are essential to the advancement of women and depend on the law's basic ability to distinguish between women and men. AB 377 succeeds at making this distinction.

Protection against male advantage that is afforded girls in the earliest stages of youth and developmental sport is just as vital as protection in elite sport. Protections for girls in K-12 should be upheld, not diminished or deferred to some later time such as post puberty or collegiate sport. It is a misguided, objectifying, and patently discriminatory trope that girls are undeserving of protection until they reach an elite level in sport, as if women are not worthy of protection until they prove themselves world class athletes. Deferring protection of girls will cause them

to leave competitive sport, never learning to love it or discovering the benefits it can provide them.

Overwhelming scientific evidence demonstrates male-female performance differences exist from the earliest stages, including in youth sports. Study after peer-reviewed study has shown clear performance advantages for males in sport *pre-puberty*. Further studies clearly show that male advantage continues to exist even after attempts to suppress testosterone. The only way sport can be fair and equal for women and girls is with a protected women's category that excludes competitors with male advantage.

As stated by ICONS co-founder Marshi Smith – “The women's category in sport has tremendous value for women. Separating girls from boys is the indispensable key to unlocking the transformative power of sport to change young girls' lives.” You hold that key in your hand, please don't throw it away. We urge Wisconsin to pass AB 377.

Respectfully,

ICONS Co-Founders  
Kim Jones and Marshi Smith

**Note to Committee:** this testimony highlights the arguments put forth in the ICONS amicus brief filed in the Ninth Circuit in support of the Arizona Save Women's Sports Act. Also included in the brief are personal testimonies of four decorated female athletes and members of the ICONS network. We are submitting the full brief for your review along with this testimony.



Hello my name is Cameron Landry. I am 16 years old and I am a Transgender boy. I came to speak with you today, to tell you my story. I knew that I was a boy for most of my life. I always wanted to be like my brothers, look like them, act like them, because that's who I felt I identified with. I wanted to play sports with boys and I knew that was who I was supposed to be. When I first came out to my parents I was 15 years old, that day changed my life. It felt as though a weight was being lifted off of my shoulders. My family loved me and accepted me for who I was, and for that I am forever grateful. I started my transition then and it truly made me happy, when I got my first haircut and had short hair, and when I started to wear boys' clothing. I was able to look into the mirror and no longer see the person I was supposed to be, but the boy I was.

Taking away the right of a trans person to play on the sports team that they feel matches with their gender identity hurts people. Doing boy's sports saved my life. I am a trans boy on my boys' cross country team and on my boys' track and field team. I am not there to make anyone else uncomfortable, but simply to do sports I love. If you took away my right to participate on the boy's team I cannot go back to the girl's team, because I started medically transitioning. I'm on testosterone. Because I would no longer be eligible to participate on the girls or boys teams. This would take away my community, I just started making friends. There will be no coed team for me to participate on either because my school is too small. I would have no team on which I could run. We are just children; we aren't striving to compete in the Olympics but merely to just have fun and play the sports we love. When you take away my right to participate on the team with the boys, the group with which I identify, then, you take away the sport from me. I am not a star athlete. I am not taking away another boy's varsity letter. We don't even have a full varsity team. I am only there to get in shape and to have fun doing something that I have always loved. I

am there to hang out with my friends, and to run. This bill is an unnecessary action in which people are trying to control my life, because they do not feel comfortable with me. Why should I as a transgender boy be forced to leave a sport that I love, because a politician is not comfortable with my existence? I am not taking anything away from anyone. I am just trying to have fun and make friends. If you vote yes for this bill it will take the opportunity of sports away from so many kids who are just trying to do the same thing as me: be a normal kid and have fun with my friends while just getting into shape. If you asked any of my teammates they would not have a problem with me being on the boy's team. They do not care, they are happy for me and they want me on the team. If this bill is passed I would not have sports in my life, I would not have that community. A community that builds each other up not tears someone down. Why are politicians trying to take that away from me? I am not there to be a threat, I am not taking anything away from anyone. In fact I am a key component on my cross country team, because there are so few of us. If you vote yes on this bill you are taking away my choice to participate in a sport I love, and you are taking away other kids' sports, too. Thank you.

October 4, 2023

Chair Kitchens, Vice-Chair Dittrich, and Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Education:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to Assembly Bill 377.

Plain and simple, excluding trans students from participating in sports teams consistent with their authentic gender identity is harmful and discriminatory.<sup>1</sup> Bills like AB 377 are part of a nationwide coordinated effort to deny transgender people their freedom, safety, and dignity. In 2023 alone, over 500 anti-LGBTQ bills have been introduced in statehouses across the country.<sup>2</sup>

Transgender students participate in sports for the same reasons other young people do: to challenge themselves, express themselves, and be part of a team. Excluding transgender students from participation just deprives them of opportunities available to their peers and sends the message they are not worthy of a full life.

Transgender athletes' participation is nothing new. Trans people of all ages have been participating in sports consistent with their gender at all levels for years, including at the Olympics since at least since 2004 and in the NCAA since at least 2011. With close to 20 years of clear policies for inclusion of women and girls who are transgender in women's events at the highest level of sport around the world, there has been absolutely no categorical dominance by women and girls who are transgender anywhere.

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<sup>1</sup> A bill with similar provisions to AB 377 was signed into law in Idaho in March 2020. The ACLU, ACLU of Idaho, Legal Voice, and Cooley LLP filed a lawsuit, and a federal judge issued a temporary injunction blocking implementation of the Idaho law in August 2020, reaching the "inescapable conclusion that the Act discriminates on the basis of transgender status." The court further held that given the small percentage of people who are transgender and the extensive discrimination that transgender people face, "it appears untenable that allowing transgender women to compete on women's teams would substantially displace female athletes." *Hecox v. Little*, No. 1:20-CV-00184-DCN, 2020 WL 4760138, at \*27 (D. Idaho Aug. 17, 2020). On August 17, 2023, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the injunction, finding the Idaho law barring transgender athletes from participating in student athletics likely violates the rights of transgender students under the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution by discriminating on the basis of sex and trans status. [https://wp.api.aclu.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/20-35813\\_Documents.pdf](https://wp.api.aclu.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/20-35813_Documents.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> "Mapping Attacks on LGBTQ Rights in U.S. State Legislatures," ACLU (Sept. 29, 2023), <https://www.aclu.org/legislative-attacks-on-lgbtq-rights>.

As the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) noted in testimony opposing 2021 AB 195, 2021 AB 196, 2021 SB 322, and 2021 SB323 last session, “[t]he WIAA, with the guidance of its Sports Medical Advisory Committee developed, approved, and implemented its Transgender Participation Policy in 2015, becoming one of the first states to create a policy to provide opportunities for transgender students while continuing to provide a level field for all student-athletes.”

Sports governing bodies created existing transgender sports policies for a population that is exceedingly small, and one that already lacks representation in sports due to exorbitant social and socioeconomic disadvantage. Testosterone is one factor of many influencing athletic ability. Trans athletes, like other athletes, do not have a single body type; there is absolutely no merit to the claim that women and girls who are transgender automatically have advantages in sport.<sup>3</sup> In fact, particularly when referring to young people, many trans athletes have physiological characteristics that are typical of peers with their gender identity and not their assigned sex. This means that a girl who is transgender may have more physiological characteristics typical of non-transgender girls than non-transgender boys.<sup>4</sup> Thus, any data purporting to compare the relative athletic abilities typical of non-transgender girls and non-transgender boys simply do not apply to most transgender youth.

For youth, advantage comes largely from proximity to privilege.<sup>5</sup> The average parent of a child in youth sports spends \$883 per single season of participation.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, disparities faced by the transgender community begin at a young age and impact all facets of life including sports access. Transgender youth are 9 times more likely to experience homelessness and associated poverty.<sup>7</sup> Sixty-eight percent experience bullying in middle school and high school.<sup>8</sup> In 2015, 22% of transgender women surveyed stated they were bullied so badly in school that they dropped out.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Declaration of Helen Carroll from *Hecox v. Little*,

[https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field\\_document/hecox\\_v\\_little\\_-\\_carroll\\_declaration.pdf](https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/hecox_v_little_-_carroll_declaration.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., *Hecox v. Little*, No. 1:20-CV-00184-DCN, 2020 WL 4760138, at \*31 (D. Idaho Aug. 17, 2020)(finding that “there is a population of transgender girls who, as a result of puberty blockers at the start of puberty and gender affirming hormone therapy afterward, never go through a typical male puberty at all”).

<sup>5</sup> “The Making of a College Athlete: High School Experiences, Socioeconomic Advantages, and the Likelihood of Playing College Sports,” *Sociology of Sport Journal* (Aug. 2021), <https://journals.humankinetics.com/view/journals/ssj/39/2/article-p129.xml>.

<sup>6</sup> “Youth Sports Facts: Challenges,” Project Play, <https://projectplay.org/youth-sports/facts/challenges>.

<sup>7</sup> “Student Homelessness: Lessons from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey,” School House Connection (June 2021), <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/YRBS-Part-III-Sexual-Orientation-and-Gender-Identity-Equity.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> “Bullying and Suicide Risk among LGBTQ Youth,” The Trevor Project (Oct. 14, 2021), <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/bullying-and-suicide-risk-among-lgbtq-youth/>.

<sup>9</sup> “The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey,” National Center for Transgender Equality (Dec. 2016), <https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS-Full-Report-Dec17.pdf>.

Without supportive services to help transgender students navigate these additional challenges, it's tougher for them than their peers to make it through class, let alone onto a soccer field. Efforts to ban transgender girls from participating in girls' sports jeopardize their mental health, physical well-being and ability to access education opportunities comparable to their peers. Having the opportunity to participate in sports results in positive outcomes for students — better grades, greater homework completion, higher educational and occupational aspirations, and improved self-esteem.<sup>10</sup> We should want that for all Wisconsin students.

Effective solutions to promote sporting fairness and equity do exist, like ensuring equal pay and opportunity for women's leagues and providing equal funding for athletic programs at less wealthy public schools. Targeting transgender women is not one of them.

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<sup>10</sup> Expert Declaration of Dr. Mary Fry from *Hecox v. Little*, [https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field\\_document/hecox\\_v\\_little\\_-\\_fry\\_declaration.pdf](https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/hecox_v_little_-_fry_declaration.pdf).

Testimony re: AB 377  
The Reverend Zayna Thomley  
Middleton Community Church, Pastor

Rev. Zayna Thomley, ordained minister of the United Church of Christ, pastor at Middleton Community Church. I've been raised and loved by the state of Wisconsin from my very beginning. I was a female athlete here 20 years ago, and I'm a mother now whose child I will soon proudly enroll in our local public school and sports.

This bill is not based on any factual data. There are others here who can speak to the science and the statistics - so I'm going to talk to you about what I know: this bill - and the other anti-trans are dangerous and while they'll do little to support cis girls, they'll send a devastating message to each and every Queer kid in our state.

I'm here as a faith leader, and a mother, and a citizen committed to building a world where all children, but especially queer kids, know they are loved. They are valued. They belong.

In our Faith Tradition we baptize babies with water. And when we do, I invite all the children of the congregation to help me bless the water. As I pour the holy water over their hands I remind them that one of the reasons we use water in this way, at the beginnings of their lives, is because we can be sure it's something they'll feel again. Every time we wash our hands, or play in the sprinkler on a hot summer day, or stand out in the rain - water can remind us what happened at the beginning of it all.

At the beginning of their lives, the children in our congregation are surrounded by a whole community who echo what God is already saying: you are beloved. You are valued. You belong.

And our hope is that as they grow, as they learn more about who they are - a process that takes an entire lifetime, and often includes school sports - they never have to question it: They are loved. They are valued. They belong.

Not every family has the same beliefs I do. Thank God for that. Or any beliefs at all! And I'm sadly aware that not every church works hard to cultivate places of love, acceptance, and belonging. For some kids, they find that on the soccer field. From their coaches, teammates, fans... and even their competitors.

I love the children of my community. I value them. And we should all be supporting spaces where they belong.... Our schools (and their sports teams) should be on that list. Let trans kids play. Thank you.

**Resolution for  
The “Save Women’s Sports Bill” in K-12 Public Education  
For WASB Delegate Convention in January 2024**

Whereas the Federal Government’s current interpretation of Title IX has caused a large perception across the country of unfairness in female sports competition;

Whereas Title IX passed in 1972 by a large majority, and signed into law, was enacted to create more equality of opportunity for girls and women;

Whereas the participation of biological males in female sports, identifying as females, has caused many female athletes to be pushed out of higher placements for awards and qualifications;

Whereas AB 377 as introduced would prevent biological males from competing in Wisconsin k-12 public schools in all-female sports;

Whereas more than 20 states in the United States of America have enacted similar legislation to AB 377;

Be it resolved that the Wisconsin Association of School Boards supports passage of the bill in Wisconsin known as the “**Save Women’s Sports Bill**” currently being considered in the Wisconsin legislature as **AB 377** in 2023.

Be it also resolved that the Wisconsin Association of School Boards further encourages the bill be passed, and signed into law in the 2023-24 legislative session.

*The above resolution was passed by the New London School Board at a special meeting of the board on Monday, August 28, 2023, and passed on to the Wisconsin Association of School Boards to be considered for adoption at its January 2024 Convention.*



Chris Martinson, President, New London School Board

Date 8/28/23

AB-377 (K-12 sports bill)

Dear committee,

My name is Eli Rittenhouse, I use he/they pronouns.

As a proudly transgender Wisconsinite, I urge you to oppose AB-377.

This legislation would set a dangerous precedent in our public schools by attacking one of the most vulnerable groups in the state, namely, transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming youth.

AB 377 wrongly discriminates against transgender KIDS in sports. This bill threatens to not only demonize and weaponize transness but also legally enforces the policing of childrens' bodies in sport.

Let trans kids play, dream, learn, make friends, and live their lives to the fullest. I urge you to oppose AB 377.

Thank you,

Eli Rittenhouse  
910 N Garfield Dr  
Janesville WI 53546



Hi. My full legal name is Emily Jane Kaddatz. However, if you asked my closest friends and family, they would call me Orogeny Jane Kaddatz, Oro for short. I am a 25 year old genderqueer person who uses any pronouns, though today, they and he feel most accurate.

I learned nearly everything I know about my gender today from sports. In my home, if I wanted to play with "boy toys" there was never a question of whether I could do so, I just did. If I wanted to wear "boy clothes", I did. And if I wanted to play "boy sports", I did. At the age of five, in my first dance classes, I remember being so confused why no one else wanted to be the "boy version of Mulan" for princess day. I didn't have the words for it then, but this was my first experience being a transgender child.

Growing up, I was involved in track and cross country in school. I love to run. I'm not very good, but I love it, so I have always done it. In middle school, I had my first experience with changing in a locker room. We had to change into uniforms for gym class and athletics. I remember being wildly uncomfortable in the girls locker room. However, growing up in a small town, I didn't want to rock the boat, so I stayed quiet. This was my first experience with trans oppression.

In high school cross country, I learned that none of the other girls were interested in bugs or rocks or many of the things I was and am interested in. In track, I learned that you couldn't safely run with a chest binder on. Every time I stepped up to the locker rooms, I felt this deep and aching sense of confusion of where I was supposed to go. I didn't fit in with the girls, nor the boys. This was my first experience with gender dysphoria.

My story is not uncommon. Had a bill like AB 377 been enacted when I was in public schooling, I would likely have become more depressed, and I would not be surprised if I had become more suicidal. AB 377 is not about educating our youth, it is about oppressing our youth. It is about keeping trans people like me out of public spaces. Trans people are here in Wisconsin and have been here for a long time before my experiences. If this bill were to become enacted, you would be making Wisconsin a more hostile place for people like me. For youth like me. I implore you to educate our youth instead of oppressing them. Do not support AB 377. Thank you.

October 4, 2023

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Christina Mitchell  
Canton, Connecticut  
Testimony in support of AB 377  
Wisconsin Committee on Education

My name is Christy Mitchell, and I am the mother of three female athletes from Connecticut. Soccer, basketball, and track have been a huge part of our lives from the time our girls were just little. My oldest daughter was a Division III track and field athlete. My youngest daughter is a senior in high school and a varsity soccer and track athlete. They are talented athletes who work hard and love to compete.

My middle daughter, though, has proven herself to be an exceptional athlete. Chelsea was among the best sprinters in New England during her high school years. Those years, however, were marked with controversy, stress, and heartbreak. In 2019, despite being the first female finisher in the 55m, 100m, and 200m at the Connecticut state championships, Chelsea was deprived of the gold medals and state titles she had earned in those races. That recognition went to a male instead.

The Connecticut policy, which categorizes sports participation by gender identity instead of sex, has been devastating for female athletes. I have stood alongside the track and watched as two males were awarded girls' state championship titles 15 different times. One of the males went on to win seven New England championship titles. This athlete had competed on the boys' team for the three prior seasons and did not even rank in the top 100 among male sprinters in our state. The sudden switch to the girls' team in 2018 brought this male a stack of gold medals and championship titles.

The female athletes from our region worked hard to be the very best at their sport – yet they were deprived of fair competition, the thrill of victory, and the honor of being a champion. They missed out on media interviews and recognition of their accomplishments that they rightfully deserve. And they couldn't inform college coaches that they had just won a championship title. These things matter to a young girl, as do the scholarships and career opportunities that can flow from that success. I can promise you this: losing the state championship to a male four times – that mattered to my daughter.

October 4, 2023

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Testimony in Support of AB 377, Committee on Education  
Independent Council on Women's Sports (ICONS)  
[www.iconswomen.com](http://www.iconswomen.com)

Members of the Committee on Education,

The Independent Council on Women's Sports submits this testimony in strong support of AB 377.

ICONS is a network and advocacy group comprised of current and former collegiate and professional women athletes, their families and supporters who believe the next generation of women and girls deserve the chance to be champions and to see an expanded and celebrated world of women's sports. Our network spans all levels of sport and includes hundreds of Olympians and professional athletes, high school and collegiate athletes, parents of young girls, and coaches and administrators. Our goal is to protect the female category for every girl, at every level, in every sport.

Recognizing biological differences between the sexes and protecting women's spaces from male intrusion are foundational for women to succeed in sports and in life. Laws giving women and girls the opportunity to take part in and succeed in sport are essential to the advancement of women and depend on the law's basic ability to distinguish between women and men. AB 377 succeeds at making this distinction.

Protection against male advantage that is afforded girls in the earliest stages of youth and developmental sport is just as vital as protection in elite sport. Protections for girls in K-12 should be upheld, not diminished or deferred to some later time such as post puberty or collegiate sport. It is a misguided, objectifying, and patently discriminatory trope that girls are undeserving of protection until they reach an elite level in sport, as if women are not worthy of protection until they prove themselves world class athletes. Deferring protection of girls will cause them

No. 23-16026

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IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

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HELEN DOE, parent and next friend of Jane Does, *et al.*,

*Plaintiffs-Appellees*

v.

THOMAS C. HORNE, in his official capacity as  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction, *et al.*,

*Defendant-Appellant,*

and

WARREN PETERSEN, Senator, President of the Arizona State Senate;  
BEN TOMA, Representative, Speaker of the Arizona House of Representatives,

*Intervenors-Defendants-Appellants.*

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Appeal from the United States District Court  
District of Arizona

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**BRIEF OF INDEPENDENT COUNCIL ON WOMEN'S SPORT  
AS *AMICI CURIAE* IN SUPPORT OF APPELLANTS**

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## INTEREST OF *AMICI CURIAE*<sup>1</sup>

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*Amici* are the Independent Council on Women's Sport (ICONS) and its members identified in Section I below. ICONS is a network and advocacy group comprised of current and former collegiate and professional women<sup>2</sup> athletes, their families and supporters who believe the next generation of women and girls deserve the chance to be champions and to see an expanded and celebrated world of women's sports. Reflecting their experience, *amici* have an interest in the preservation of the female category in sport.

### PARTIES' CONSENT TO FILING AMICUS BRIEF

The undersigned counsel has contacted counsel for all parties in this appeal and received confirmation that no party objects to the filing of this amicus brief.

### SUMMARY

Recognizing biological differences between the sexes and protecting women's spaces from male intrusion are foundational for women to succeed in sports and in life. It is the experience of *Amici* that legal protections giving women

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with Appellate Rule 29(a)(4)(E), counsel affirms the undersigned counsel authored this brief, no counsel for any party authored this brief in whole or in part, and no party, party's counsel, or person other than the *amicus curiae*, its members, or counsel, contributed money intended to fund preparing or submitting this brief.

<sup>2</sup> As used herein the terms "male" "female" "man" "woman" "men" "women" and "girls" and "boys" are used to refer to members of the male or female sex without regard to gender identification.

## ARGUMENT

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### I. EXPERIENCE OF INDIVIDUAL *AMICI*

Sex separated sport is necessary for girls to develop a healthy view of their own bodies. For many girls, lessons learned in sport are vital to overcoming obstacles and succeeding in life. Yet, due to male biological advantages, failing to protect the girls' category will cause girls to leave sport. Therefore, protecting sex separation in girls' sports is foundational to the health, happiness, and success of future generations of women.

#### A. Lauren Bondly, Age-Group National Champion Triathlete, U.S. National Team Member, Engineer

Lauren Bondly explains why participation in sex separated sport is vital to women developing a healthy view of their own bodies:

“It is impossible for me to overstate the importance competitive sport has played in my life. I can say without risk of hyperbole it saved my life and career.

“Like many young women, I suffered from anorexia in my late teens and early twenties. I began running to burn calories and create another means to control my compulsive weight loss. One day I entered a local 5k road race and in part because I had given myself permission to eat a full meal the night before – just for this special occasion – I ended up winning my age group. This was the turning point in my illness.

“Anorexia deceives sufferers into believing it is virtuous to be hungry, that



“Sport is not just a game. I have witnessed the desire to be the best motivate women to quit alcohol and drugs, to leave abusive relationships, and like me, to overcome mental health issues and foster the fortitude to endure and overcome injustice.

Sport is too important to turn it into a tool that teaches girls to get comfortable being on the receiving end of injustice, or that hard work and overcoming adversity is futile. We cannot replace the strong female bodies on the women’s podium with impossibly unattainable male bodies and pretend that will have no effect on young girls and women who need strong female role models.

Finally, sport must be about fairness. If women do not deserve and receive fairness in the one place where ‘fair play’ is supposed to be ensured and upheld, what chance do women have in business or elsewhere where women are treated unfairly, and are told to, and expected to, just accept it?”

**B. Jennifer Sey, U.S. National Champion Gymnast, U.S. National Team Member First Female Global Brand President at Levi Strauss & Co., Producer of Emmy Award Winning Documentary on Abuse of U.S. Gymnasts**

Sport is integral to girls overcoming obstacles and succeeding in life. From age 6 Jennifer Sey pursued her dream of competing on the U.S. gymnastics team and winning a national championship, a goal she realized after more than 10 years of dedication and hard work.

in competitive gymnastics helped find her voice and shape her leadership style, telling Brzezinski, “I’ve learned that your life and journey is not a straight line, and you will get knocked down. When you advocate for yourself, it’s not always going to go the way that you want. But you keep going.”<sup>5</sup>

Jennifer’s path to career success flowed directly from lessons learned as a female athlete, and she is concerned that allowing males to compete in the female category of sport will deprive girls of opportunities to compete on a level playing field. She explains:

“I started gymnastics in 1975, at 6 years old, just three years after the passage of Title IX. In 1976 Nadia Comaneci won the Olympics. Accelerated by the passage of Title IX, gyms started popping up all over the United States – and active little girls like me took to them in droves. With the promise of college scholarships, sport – and gymnastics in particular – gave little girls a chance to thrive.

“By age 10 I made my first National Team. And in 1986, just 9 months after fracturing my femur at the World Championships, I became the National Champion. Gymnastics taught me the values of perseverance, hard work, and discipline. Ultimately, I learned that never giving up meant I could achieve

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[gymnast-global-brand-president-levi-s-ncna1272382/](#)

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

against which I have been fighting all my life.”

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**C. Janel Jorgensen McArdle, Olympic Silver Medalist, Chief Operating Officer Swim Across America**

Janel Jorgensen McArdle knows that protecting sex separated sport is essential to girls remaining in sport. She speaks from the experiences of a life at the highest levels of competitive sport and sport-based philanthropy and as a woman heading a national organization with thousands of volunteers that has raised over \$100 million for cancer research, prevention, and treatment.

Janel first faced unfair competition when she reached the pinnacle of her sport, competing against the East Germans at the Seoul Olympics in 1988. She explains, “We all knew what was happening and we knew we were robbed of a gold medal we deserved. We were told to be silent, to not risk being called poor losers. Now, decades later, it’s well understood the East Germans were doping, and East German victory was tainted.

“Testosterone and androgenizing drugs were given in large quantities to East German athletes, creating an unfair advantage clean athletes could not overcome. The East German scandal was enormous and remains a black mark on the history of women’s sport. Yet, the scandal we are creating in women’s sports today is even worse. I had the benefit of sex-testing, a cheek swab to verify my biology. I knew with full confidence the athletes I was racing were women, even if some were artificially enhanced with male androgens.

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“Yet, for as much as I love swimming, I know that if I had been faced with gross unfairness in my sport early on or repeatedly, I would not have continued. If I stood on the block next to a male body that I knew I could not beat, the frustration would have forced me to quit. Had that happened my life may have had fewer meaningful and significant opportunities to impact others.

“I want sport for girls growing up today to be what it was for me until I got to the Olympics . . . an amazing environment where I learned confidence, perseverance, and grit. I know what it feels like to step up to the starting block and know that even if I were given a head start, I couldn’t compete against the illegal drugs pulsing through my competitor’s veins. I know what it feels like to be a 17-year-old girl standing on the Olympic podium holding the wrong-colored medal because it wasn’t a fair race. I don’t want other young girls and women to endure similar experiences, but I see that they are, and with increasing regularity. There is no excuse for perpetuating this injustice. Our girls deserve fair and equal opportunities in sports.

“After all the progress women have made in recent decades, I do not understand why so many people are turning a blind eye to injustice and to the history of what women have fought for. Of course, boys and men facing gender dysphoria should be cared for, however, allowing them to compete in the women’s category only unjustly shifts pain and unfairness to girls and women who will

“At the start of that season, I told myself and my coach I had decided to win an NCAA title. I wrote a goal sheet outlining the race to achieve my goal time, 52.82 a time I chose to break my school record by .01 seconds. I described my devotion to reaching that goal from swimming sets before dawn to running hundreds of grueling stadium steps and always drifting to sleep believing my dream was achievable...52.82...52.82...52.82. I talked about walking onto the pool deck at the NCAA Championships that year knowing nobody could possibly want to win more than I did. And then I did. I touched the wall in 52.82 exactly to the hundredth of a second. I broke my school record. I won a national title. The manager hired me on the spot.

“At the time I was one of only two women working for the company in a national sales position. I stood on the national stage as a top sales representative several times in my career, often as one of very few women. They say, ‘a picture is worth a thousand words.’ Below is a picture of the 2017 National Sales Meeting ‘Territory of the Year’ Award winners from my company. It won’t be difficult for the reader to pick me out in the picture. Yet, I know my life would not have led to that stage had men been allowed to compete against me in sport.

“Although my goal has changed, I have equal passion and devotion today to what I had on my college pool deck. My new goal sheet commits to preserving the equal chance for my seven-year-old daughter to see herself as a champion. She has

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**II. SEX IS A BIOLOGICAL FACT AND ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE IS TIED DIRECTLY TO SEX**

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**A. The District Court's Opinion Overly Simplifies the Scientific Issues and Places Undue Reliance on the District Court Decision in *Hecox***

The lynchpin of the district court's decision is its erroneous conclusion that, "the well-established scientific consensus is that, before puberty, there are no significant physiological differences in athletic performance between boys and girls." Order on Motion for Preliminary Injunction, Doc. 127 ("Order"), p. 28, ¶153. This finding regarding an alleged "well-established scientific consensus" was the basis on which the lower court concluded the Save Women's Sports Act (the "Act") could not survive heightened scrutiny because the legislature's goal of "promot[ing] equality and equity in athletic opportunities," ¶152 was purportedly not supported by "persuasive evidence." ¶158.

However, the supposed "well-established scientific consensus" that underlies the court's key holding does not exist. In fact, the court's conclusion regarding the alleged absence of evidence male performance before puberty is not even supported by the trial court record.

Rather, the court below disregarded substantial scientific evidence that significant physiological differences in males and females at birth lead to clear differences in sport performance well before puberty. Abundant evidence was presented to the trial court of the pre-puberty sport performance advantages of

case of pre-puberty male advantage provides a sufficient factual basis for the Act, demonstrating the Act is substantially related to the goal of providing fair and equal playing opportunities for girls and should have resulted in the Act being upheld.

The district court's error regarding whether pre-puberty sport performance differences exist between boys and girls flowed from a further error made in its factual findings where the court found, "[t]he Plaintiffs' experts' opinions are based on the scientific consensus that the biological cause of average differences in athletic performance between men and women is caused by the presence of circulating levels of testosterone beginning with male puberty." Order, ¶97 (citing expert reports that rely on a 2018 paper by Dr. David Handelsman); *see also* Order, ¶101 (basing same conclusion on Plaintiff's expert who relies on a 2017 paper by Dr. Handelsman). However, this conclusion results from a misunderstanding of Dr. Handelsman's papers.

Dr. Handelsman is a well-known endocrinologist frequently engaged to assist governing bodies in elite sport such as the World Anti-Doping Agency and the International Association of Athletics Federations (renamed World Athletics), the international governing body for track and field. *See* <https://worldathletics.org/news/press-release/cas-dsd-experts>; <https://www.wada-ama.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/wada-medical-information-list-of->

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**B. Male Sport Performance Advantage is Clearly Apparent at Every Age, Even Pre-Puberty**

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Contrary to the findings of the district court, overwhelming scientific evidence demonstrates male-female performance differences exist from the earliest stages, including in youth sports. Study after peer-reviewed study has shown clear performance advantages for males in sport *pre-puberty*.<sup>6</sup>

For instance, a comprehensive review of fitness data from over 85,000 Australian children aged 9-17 years showed that compared to 9-year-old females, 9-year-old males were faster at short sprints (9.8%) and one mile (16.6%), could jump 9.5% further from a standing position (a test of explosive strength), could complete 33% more push-ups in 30 seconds and had a 13.8% stronger grip.<sup>7</sup> A similarly large advantage for males was found in a study of Greek children, in which 6-year-old males, compared to 6-year-old females, completed 16.6% more shuttle runs in a given time and could jump 9.7% further from a standing position. In terms of aerobic endurance capacity, 6–7-year-old males were shown to have higher absolute and relative (to body mass) maximum oxygen uptake than 6–7-

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<sup>6</sup> See, e.g., age group standards in USA swimming reflective of male advantage at every age, distance and stroke, available at: <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/timesdocuments/time-standards/2024/2021-2024-national-age-group-motivational-times.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Catley MJ, Tomkinson GR. Normative health-related fitness values for children: analysis of 85347 test results on 9-17-year-old Australians since 1985. *Br J Sports Med.* 2013 Jan;47(2):98-108.



proposition that, “[t]he alleged harm to Defendants and Intervenors—“that biological girls will be forced to compete against transgender girls who allegedly have an athletic advantage”—is unsupported by the record.” Order, ¶ 182, citing *A.M.*, 617 F.Supp. 3d at 968.

### 1. Higher Androgen Levels in Male Infants

Megan Roe contends that hormone suppressing “medication has prevented her from undergoing male puberty”<sup>11</sup> and as a result her expert concludes Roe has no residual performance advantage from being born male. This is wrong as the studies cited below make clear. In fact, to fully mitigate the performance enhancing effects of testosterone on Doe and Roe hormone intervention would had to have commenced at birth if not in the womb.

Differences in average body length (measured as head-bottom length) can be detected by ultrasound from the first trimester of pregnancy, with males already longer than females.<sup>12</sup> Larger average skull diameter in male fetuses at twenty weeks has been reported.<sup>13</sup> Gestational growth charts track not just higher male values for skull diameter but also abdominal circumference and estimated fetal

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<sup>11</sup> Complaint, Doc. 1, ¶ 59.

<sup>12</sup> Pedersen, 1980. Ultrasound evidence of sexual difference in fetal size in first trimester. *British Medical Journal* 281(6250): 1253.

<sup>13</sup> Persson et al., 1978. Impact of fetal and maternal factors on the normal growth of the biparietal diameter. *Scandinavian Association of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists* 78: 21-27.

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Increased testosterone levels during this “mini-puberty” phase in males

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aged 1-6 months may be correlated with a faster growth rate and an “imprinting effect” on body mass index and body weight.<sup>19</sup> This burst of testosterone is associated with higher growth velocity for males in the first six months of life,<sup>20</sup> higher weight gain, lower acquisition of body fat and lower body mass index.<sup>21</sup> Such data led Dr. Hilton to opine in the *A.M.* case that “transient exposure to testosterone in mini-puberty thus seems to underpin the well-established structural differences between males and females in childhood.”<sup>22</sup>

## 2. Differences in Pre-Pubertal Skeletal Size and Strength

As noted above, there are differences in male skeletal structure compared to females. In one study of pre-pubertal subjects, the “cross-sectional areas of [the lumbar spine] were significantly smaller in girls than in boys.”<sup>23</sup> The difference

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[abstract/48/5/821/2679038?redirectedFrom=fulltext&login=false](#)

<sup>19</sup> Lanciotti L, Cofini M, Leonardi A, Penta L, Esposito S. Up-To-Date Review About Minipuberty and Overview on Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Gonadal Axis Activation in Fetal and Neonatal Life. *Front Endocrinol (Lausanne)*. 2018 Jul 23;9:410.

<sup>20</sup> Kiviranta et al., 2016. Transient Postnatal Gonadal Activation and Growth Velocity in Infancy. *Pediatrics* 138(1): e20153561.

<sup>21</sup> Becker et al., 2015. Hormonal ‘minipuberty’ influences the somatic development of boys but not of girls up to the age of 6 years. *Clinical Endocrinology* 83: 694-701.

<sup>22</sup> *A.M.* case, Dkt. No. 36-6, ¶ 3.5.

<sup>23</sup> Gilsanz, V., Kovanlikaya, A., Costin, G., Roe, T.F., Sayre, J., Kaufman F., “Differential Effect of Gender on the Sizes of the Bones in the Axial and Appendicular Skeletons,” *Journ. of Clinical Endocrin. & Metabolism*, Volume 82, Issue 5, 1 May 1997, Pages 1603–1607 available at:

not experienced by males.”<sup>27</sup> In short, male-female differences impacting sport performance are so extensive they cannot be fully described in a brief.

### **C. Male Advantage Exists Even After Attempts to Suppress Testosterone Levels**

To test the idea that testosterone suppression and feminizing hormones would eliminate male advantages in sport Drs. Hilton and Lundberg reviewed *eleven published, peer-reviewed original studies* in male individuals identifying as transgender who had undergone at least 12 months of testosterone suppression. They found a unified consensus that muscle mass and strength measurements remained far higher than in female reference subjects. Hilton & Lundberg, Female Category of Sport. Their conclusions were supported by transgender runner and scientist Joanna Harper in a second review of the same dataset who concluded while “hormone therapy decreases strength, LBM and muscle area, yet values remain above that observed in cisgender women, even after 36 months.”<sup>28</sup>

In another recent study, boys self-identifying as girls who had received puberty blockers from around 13 years of age, then cross-sex hormones at 16 years of age grew to an average adult height (180.4cm) far larger than the population

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<sup>27</sup> *A.M. case*, Dkt. No. 36-6, ¶ 4.5.

<sup>28</sup> Harper *et al.*, 2021. How does hormone transition in transgender women change body composition, muscle strength and haemoglobin? Systematic review with a focus on the implications for sport participation. *British Journal of Sports Medicine* 55(15): 865-872.

Her concerns are substantiated by reports of women in other sports who chose not to compete against males because they understand they “have zero chance, so what is the point of wasting our money on registration fees?”<sup>30</sup>

**C. Requiring Sport to Accept Eligibility Rules Not Based on Objective Criteria Harms Both Women and Sport**

Fixed rules are “fundamental in representing the boundaries of fair sporting competition.”<sup>31</sup> To facilitate competitive fairness, increase sport opportunities and protect the safety of athletes, objective sport eligibility rules such as age limits, amateurism rules, anti-doping rules, paralympic disability classifications, qualifying standards, senior classifications, weight categories and sex-based categories are essential.

Until recently objective rules have not been considered subject to an athlete’s decision to opt out of compliance. Wrestlers and boxers for instance are still not able to self-declare their preferred weight class. Adults may not compete in junior categories no matter how unskilled the adult or how much better it might make them feel to compete with the children they may wish they were. Yet, whenever objective criteria are abandoned in favor of self-defined entry criteria the results tend to be unfair, administratively unworkable, and destructive to sport.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> See, e.g., <https://quillette.com/2022/09/28/is-this-the-lia-thomas-of-disc-golf/>.

<sup>31</sup> Handelsman, *et al.*, *Sex Differences in Athletic Performance*, p. 806.

<sup>32</sup> For instance, the former head of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) recently called for reform to save the integrity of the Games due to Paralympians

when the very biological factors which justified Title IX's embrace of sex-separation in sport persist.

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It would be nice if Title IX were magic dust that could make all things work out well in the end. Title IX is not, however, magic dust to be sprinkled on a problem to make it go away. Title IX is instead a statute drafted to protect women and girls, that uses terms such as "women," "men" "girls" and "boys" with fixed meanings rooted in biology and what English language dictionaries for centuries have said they mean. Only if those terms are given their fixed, original meaning can the statute do its job and only if Title IX is interpreted as protecting "women" and "girls" will it cease being a sword that harms them.

Only if Title IX is interpreted correctly will it confer the benefits *Amici* have experienced as Title IX was intended to do and long did so well, providing opportunities to girls and women, helping them overcome discrimination, prosper and succeed.

The district court misinterpreted Title IX and found pivotal facts without an adequate basis in the record to substitute its opinion for that of the Arizona Legislature. The district court's decision should be reversed.

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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

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I hereby certify that on September 15, 2023, I electronically filed the foregoing document with the Clerk of the Court for the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit by using the CM/ECF system. Participants in this case who are registered CM/ECF users will be served by the CM/ECF system.

/s/ William Bock, III

William Bock, III  
KROGER, GARDIS & REGAS, LLP  
111 Monument Circle, Suite 900  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
Phone: (317) 692-9000

Counsel for *Amici Curiae*

## Pratt, Laura

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**From:** Reggie Steurer <reggiesteurer@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 2, 2023 11:23 PM  
**To:** Pratt, Laura  
**Subject:** Anti-Trans bill hearings

Hello there,

My name is Reggie Steurer. Although you may not know me, I'm a transgender youth who lives in Janesville Wisconsin. I'm not able to attend the hearing but I thought being able to put a word in would be useful.

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Passing these anti-trans bills across the nation is not only showing the blatant disregard for basic human rights, but it's an outright attack against my community. What does me being born in the wrong body have to do with the older generations of America? Why does the concept of gender, an entirely made up social construct, have to be any of your concern. Transgender people of all labels have been around for centuries upon centuries. People want to claim that people only began coming out now, but you have to realize that it's not that more people are "chasing a trend", it's that we as a society have been creating an environment where people felt comfortable to come out. That environment has been stripped away from us along with our rights. Being able to be open about the LGBTQ+ community as a whole allows people not only to feel safe in a world where we all have to co-exist, but it brings awareness of the history and the hardships that we witnessed and continue to go through. Taking away gender affirming care for me and so many other individuals is going to be catastrophic. Gender affirming care saves lives. It is a scientific fact that suicide rates for transgender youth goes down when they receive the gender affirming care they need. Why strip that away from us? These bills are being passed by the minds and opinions of Cisgendered people, people who have never once experienced what it's like to wake up every single day and know you aren't who you're supposed to be. This is not fair. This is not the kind of world we should be living in. I should not be scared that when I wake up, I will have less rights than I did yesterday simply for existing in the wrong body. Put yourself in my shoes for once. Look at this whole situation from my stand point. Please. I don't want to live in fear anymore.

**Josh Peterson-Droogh**  
**Testimony on AB 377:**

A few years ago my daughter who is trans (male-to-female) at 10 years old asked if she could play soccer. She is very uncoordinated and is not that great at any sport. I was living in Idaho at the time, the first state to ban transgender sports. I did not want to tell her that she could not play soccer because she identified as female or that because people passed laws to prevent her from playing a sport out of fear she would be too good. Instead I said I will think about it and never talked about it again. I realized then that Idaho was no place to raise my daughter and that I needed to find a place where she could play a sport with her peers even though she is really bad at it. We chose to move to Wisconsin because of the diversity, acceptance, and opportunities.





## **Testimony from the Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce on Assembly Bills 377 and 378**

On behalf of our nearly 700 business members from around the state, the Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce stands adamantly opposed to Assembly Bills 377 and 378.

Wisconsin's economy thrives when businesses champion diversity, equity, and inclusion. Wisconsin's vibrant business community has made significant strides in creating an inclusive environment where everyone, regardless of their gender identity or expression, is free to be their authentic selves. This is not just a matter of principle; it's a strategic advantage.

This bill puts this progress at risk. By sanctioning discriminatory practices in the public school system, it sends a detrimental message that Wisconsin is no longer the welcoming, inclusive state we have been working diligently to become. It damages Wisconsin's reputation as a hub for innovation, creativity, and economic growth and harms our ability to compete in the marketplace by discriminating against LGBTQ+ individuals. These restrictions would have a chilling effect and prevent Wisconsin from attracting and retaining top talent, who value diversity and inclusion.

We implore you to prioritize Wisconsin's economic interests and the principles of diversity and inclusion that have bolstered our state's strength. We are stronger when we embrace diversity, and we at the Chamber are unwavering in our commitment to creating a Wisconsin where everyone can thrive.

Support for  
AB 377/AB 378  
October 3, 2023

To the Wisconsin Assembly Members,

I am writing as a private citizen, parent and grandparent of four to express my strong support for two proposed Bills. I support **Assembly Bill 377**, K12 Athlete Protection as well as **Assembly Bill 378** College Athlete Protection.

Both of these Bills will protect women's sports, and we must stand up for them. Biological males should not be allowed in women's sports. Scholarships and opportunities for women are being taken away by biological men. Title IX is being re-written and failing our country's female athletes.

I greatly appreciate your time and effort and I urge you to please support both of the proposed Bills **Assembly Bill 377 and Assembly Bill 378**.

Sincerely,

Amber Infusino  
10606 7th St.  
Sturtevant, WI 53177

October 4, 2023

Christina Mitchell  
Canton, Connecticut  
Testimony in support of AB 377  
Wisconsin Committee on Education

My name is Christy Mitchell, and I am the mother of three female athletes from Connecticut. Soccer, basketball, and track have been a huge part of our lives from the time our girls were just little. My oldest daughter was a Division III track and field athlete. My youngest daughter is a senior in high school and a varsity soccer and track athlete. They are talented athletes who work hard and love to compete.

My middle daughter, though, has proven herself to be an exceptional athlete. Chelsea was among the best sprinters in New England during her high school years. Those years, however, were marked with controversy, stress, and heartbreak. In 2019, despite being the first female finisher in the 55m, 100m, and 200m at the Connecticut state championships, Chelsea was deprived of the gold medals and state titles she had earned in those races. That recognition went to a male instead.

The Connecticut policy, which categorizes sports participation by gender identity instead of sex, has been devastating for female athletes. I have stood alongside the track and watched as two males were awarded girls' state championship titles 15 different times. One of the males went on to win seven New England championship titles. This athlete had competed on the boys' team for the three prior seasons and did not even rank in the top 100 among male sprinters in our state. The sudden switch to the girls' team in 2018 brought this male a stack of gold medals and championship titles.

The female athletes from our region worked hard to be the very best at their sport – yet they were deprived of fair competition, the thrill of victory, and the honor of being a champion. They missed out on media interviews and recognition of their accomplishments that they rightfully deserve. And they couldn't inform college coaches that they had just won a championship title. These things matter to a young girl, as do the scholarships and career opportunities that can flow from that success. I can promise you this: losing the state championship to a male four times – that mattered to my daughter.

She's not alone – hundreds of girls in Connecticut and throughout New England lost championships, awards, and their chance to compete because biological sex categories in sport were abandoned. In the years since, examples like ours have become all too common and unfortunately girls in some states continue to be sidelined from their own sports.


We have also seen great progress in the past few years with many states taking steps to protect the female category. Chelsea is now a senior in college and competing at a school in a state that protects female sports at both the high school and collegiate level. They have responded to the very clear scientific research and overwhelming consensus that a protected female category is the right approach. Female athletes in Wisconsin deserve safe and fair competition too, and you have the opportunity to take a stand on their behalf and protect their rights.

People often try to ignore our story or say that what happened in Connecticut wasn't a big deal. That is untrue. It was a very big deal to many young athletes like my daughter Chelsea. I had a front row seat to the devastating impacts, and I am sharing our story in hopes that this doesn't have to happen to anyone in your state.

At the age of seventeen, Chelsea had to speak up and take a stand because the state of Connecticut would not. It is a heavy lift for a teenager, I assure you. I ask you to stand up for the rights and welfare of your female athletes, so that the weight of this issue is carried by you, rather than placed on the shoulders of the young girls in Wisconsin.

Please pass AB 377.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christina Mitchell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Christina" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Mitchell".

Christina Mitchell

Haini piji/Good morning Representatives,

I write today to oppose AB 337.

I am a lifelong athlete. From childhood, through high school, and into the Masters Level, I have been a competitive swimmer. I have loved athletics my whole life. In fact, I recently swam in a new challenge—swimming a mile in the San Francisco Bay.

For more than a decade, I have also been a member of Madison Roller Derby, which is a league under the umbrella of the Women's Flat Track Roller Derby Association. If you aren't familiar with Roller Derby, it is a full contact sport, played on quad (roller) skates. The WFTDA states that the organization "is committed to inclusive and anti-discrimination practices in relation to all transgender women, intersex women, and gender expansive participants, and aims to ensure that all skaters', volunteers', and employees' rights are respected and protected."

In my 10+ year roller derby career, I have played with, and against cis women and men, trans women and men, and nonbinary folx, at multiple levels. I've played in a recreational league, as well our local league, I've competed in tournaments across the country, and also played in the Roller Derby World Cup, as a member of Team Greece.

Our sport shows that size, and weight are not the end all be all of sports. I've played with skaters of all sizes and gender expressions. They've been a wide variety of shapes and sizes, and a wide range of abilities. Some have been excellent athletes, others have not. The one thing they do have in common, is that their gender expression has not given them an unfair advantage.

I've always believed that participating in youth sports offers kids an opportunity to learn important lessons and skills that will help them throughout their lives. You learn how to put the work in to reach a goal. You learn about working with people who may differ from you in myriad ways, and put together a team with a common goal. You make friendships with these kids who you might not have ever met without the sport. And you also learn how to respect others, how to be good sportspeople and how to be a gracious winner and loser. You learn that sometimes all the hard work and training leads you to your goal, whether it is scoring a point or winning a race, but other times it still might not lead you to a win. Kids also learn that winning isn't the end all be all. That playing a sport you like is fun, even if you don't win all the tournaments. And ultimately, also learn the joy of movement, leading them to pursue healthier choices and activities that will benefit their health for their entire lives.

Denying Trans kids the opportunity to participate in youth sports not only affects Trans kids. It affects all kids, and denies them a chance to learn how to work together, through the wins and the losses. Please do not take the chance to participate in athletics away from our Trans kids, who need the outlet for their own mental health.

Piinagigi/Thank you,

Arvina Martin  
Madison, WI 53705

Dear Rep. Kitchens, and the Assembly Education Committee.

My name is Liz Kuchinka, I live at 1024 Grandview Blvd, Washburn, WI. I am writing in opposition to AB 377, which prohibits transgender female students (male at birth) from participating in girls or women's sports in Wisconsin Schools. It is my fear this bill is being introduced to garner votes in the upcoming election without thinking of the real consequences to real people. Sports should be a place for all students to gain lifelong skills without fear of not be included for some perceived threat. Transgender kids want to participate in sports to gain the same benefits as other kids and should be welcomed onto whatever team fits their gender identity. This bill will cause real harm to a group of very vulnerable students. Please do not vote to move it forward to the floor of the Assembly.

Sincerely,

Liz Kuchinka

Daniel G. Koster, MD, President  
Physicians for Freedom  
PO Box 553  
Green Bay, WI 54305  
<https://physiciansforfreedom.org>  
[pres@physiciansforfreedom.org](mailto:pres@physiciansforfreedom.org)



3 October 2023

**Committee on Colleges and Universities, AB 377, 378**  
9:00 AM Wednesday, October 4, 2023

I am Dr. Daniel Koster, President of Physicians for Freedom. I submit these written remarks along with those of four of our members because our patient responsibilities prevent us from speaking in person.

To many people, it is absurd or unbelievable even to debate questions like whether males can truly become females, or compete in sports with the opposite sex after transitioning. The universal truth of sex differences set at conception and guiding development of every cell, organ and human (not to mention all animals and plants!) seems too obvious even to question. We see with our own eyes the frustration and unfairness of elite women swimmers losing to Lia (nee Will) Thomas. We see the barbarity and pain of biological males sending female opponents to the hospital in contact sports, or even volleyball. Yet we see so called experts, and media, and some fellow citizens nodding along approvingly, apparently unaware of the madness of it. Out of compassion and a decent desire to be good and fair, we question ourselves. We ask, "What have I missed? What do I have wrong?" And we keep silent.

To figure it out, we turn to experts. PFF and others with expertise are eager to provide all the information we can. Not here, as time does not allow, but here we do assert:

- that advocates of "gender affirming care" -- including authorities like the AMA, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Psychological Association -- are wrong;
- that gender is "assigned at birth" is wrong;
- that adults help kids by encouraging them to question their sex is wrong;
- that parents endanger their kids' by questioning transition is wrong;
- that males who transitioned can safely and fairly compete with female athletes is wrong;
- that children in pain and confusion are capable of making the best lifelong decisions - decisions which forever mutilate and sterilize them -- is wrong.

**Physicians for Freedom** promotes fact-based, rational and respectful debate to achieve mutual understanding, responsible self-government, peace and liberty.

As I said, we seek factual, rational and respectful debate (PFF's mission, by the way) on these critical issues. Take us up on that offer!

Until then, trust yourself. Trust your own eyes, your own experience. Trust your gut. Trust your kind and loving heart. And do not be silent! Speak out with other loving, compassionate parents and friends. Share opinions, ask questions in good faith. Do not allow political agendas, greed and lies to harm our children. They are depending on us to speak out for the truth.

Sincerely,

Daniel G. Koster, MD





# Women's Declaration International

Testimony of Kerri Bruss  
Before the House Education Committee  
Wisconsin Assembly Bill 377  
October 3, 2023

## SUPPORT

Thank you, members of the House Education Committee, for allowing me the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Assembly Bill 377. My name is Kerri Bruss and I reside in Waukesha County, Wisconsin.

Women's Declaration International (WDI) is a global, nonpartisan group of volunteer women dedicated to protecting women's sex-based rights. WDI USA is its U.S. chapter. WDI is based on the Declaration on Women's Sex-Based Rights, which has 35,000 signatures globally. WDI USA urges you to support this bill on the basis of Article 7 of the Declaration, "Reaffirming women's rights to the same opportunities as men to participate actively in sports and physical education," an Article which is consistent with Article 10 (g) of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), as well as with the Title IX Education Amendments of 1972.

In recent years, there has been an incursion of men and boys into women's and girls' athletic competitions on the basis of so-called "gender identity," a linguistic mechanism by which men and boys claim the identity of women and girls. This claim has no basis in observable material reality.

The provision of single-sex sports is necessary if women and girls are to have opportunities that are on a par with those of men and boys. As Eric Vilain, a professor of human genetics at UCLA and consultant to the IOC medical commission has noted, "We separate men and women into categories because we want women to be able to win some competitions. There is a 10% to 12% difference between male and female athletic performance." Significant differences in the average bone density, heart size, lung volume, hemoglobin levels, and muscle development of men and women, among other physical differences, result in men being able to generate higher speed and power during physical activity. Even after two years of testosterone suppression, males retain physical advantage over females, especially when it comes to speed.

If sex segregation in sports continues to be eroded, more and more women and girls will lose their spots on teams and podiums to males. This is in direct opposition to Title IX, as well as common sense and the principles of fairness in athletic competitions. It is fairness – a level playing field – that must prevail over arguments about the inclusion of males as females, if women's and girls' sports are to exist as legitimate competitions. I urge you to support this bill and help save women's sports in Wisconsin.

Kerri Bruss  
Signatory to the Declaration on Women's Sex-Based Rights  
Country Contact WDI USA

## **Bender-Olson, Katie**

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**From:** Delaporte, Bob  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 04, 2023 8:16 AM  
**To:** Bender-Olson, Katie; Rep.Andraca; Rep.Binsfeld; Rep.Considine; Rep.Dittrich; Rep.Duchow; Rep.Hong; Rep.Kitchens; Rep.Mursau; Rep.Myers; Rep.Nedweski; Rep.Penterman; Rep.Rozar; Rep.Shelton; Rep.Wichgers; Rep.Wittke; Wyrstek, Ryan  
**Subject:** FW: I support AB377

Good morning, Bob! I wanted to convey my support for AB 377 in an effort to protect girls sports in our K-12 schools.

I've coached and administered youth sports for over twenty years, and I never even dreamed that we would be having this discussion. It's one thing to have coed soccer teams at very young ages; it's quite another to have middle and high school students of different sexes competing against each other. We all know the obvious physiological differences between boys and girls once they enter adolescence: bone density, musculature, lung capacity, etc. that make physical competition unfair and potentially unsafe when biological males compete directly against females. We must also consider other factors:

- Physical safety, privacy and propriety in locker rooms or on buses as boys are allowed to change clothes or shower with girls, or potentially cause harm in a dark, less supervised environment
- Subjugations of the rights of the many girls for the few boys participating in a girls sport as girls are forced or manipulated to accept, accommodate and even celebrate boys in all of their private spaces
- Higher potential for boys to rob girls of accomplishments and achievements that would have otherwise created opportunities for the girls, helped them increase their confidence and/or learn the full gamut of lessons available from athletics, and even their memories from performing on a level playing field.

I think that it's sad that we even need to have this bill introduced. This is just common sense, and frankly we need to "stop the stupid" here. Safety and fair play are far more important in youth & high school sports than trying to force agendas and wrong thinking. I want to thank Representative Bodden and Senator Stroebel for sponsoring this bill. I'm proud to be your constituent.

I would also like to mention that boys competing in girls sports is clearly a violation of Title IX. We shouldn't even need a bill for that protection to remain intact.

Thank you for sharing my email with the Committee, Bob. Have a great Wednesday!

Cindi Brewer  
5758 Cedar View Court  
Hartford, WI 53027  
Sent from my iPhone



122 W. WASHINGTON AVENUE, MADISON, WI 53703  
PHONE: 608-257-2622 • TOLL-FREE: 877-705-4422  
FAX: 608-257-8386 • WEBSITE: WASB.ORG

DANIEL M. ROSSMILLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TO: Members, Assembly Committee on Education  
FROM: Chris Kulow, Government Relations Director  
RE: OPPOSITION to Assembly Bill 377, relating to designating athletic sports and teams operated or sponsored by public schools or private schools participating in a parental choice program based on the sex of the participants.  
DATE: October 4, 2023

We are providing testimony in opposition to this bill for three main reasons. Our opposition to the bill stems primarily from a concern that the bill, as introduced, will likely create new legal concerns for schools.

1. This bill, in its present form, negates both local control and regulation by the WIAA in favor of a rigid “one size fits all” approach imposed on local school boards by the state.
2. This bill contains provisions that could encourage students and parents to sue their local school districts.
3. This bill would place school districts in the difficult and untenable position of having to choose between following a state law directive or the current interpretation of federal antidiscrimination statutes by federal agencies.

### **Local Control**

The WASB believes that the prime purpose of locally elected school boards is to conceive and implement school programs designed to serve local students, consistent with local needs, state goals and national programs and that accountability shall reside with the local school districts.

Several Wisconsin school boards have adopted district policies specifically addressing transgender status of students, including gender identify, gender nonconformity and gender expression. These policies address a variety of topics including discrimination, bullying and harassment, names and pronouns, student privacy concerns, participation in interscholastic athletics and restroom and locker room accessibility.

In these school districts, school boards and communities have sought to accommodate the needs of individual students as well as the values of their community. Working on a case-by-case basis, these boards have been able to develop local policies that work for their circumstances, and most importantly, for their students.

### **WIAA Autonomy**

In addition, the regulatory body for interscholastic athletics in Wisconsin—the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletics Association (WIAA)—has a policy and process in place for determining eligibility for participation of transgender students.

The WIAA was among the first state associations in the country to develop a transgender participation rule

with the help of the doctors who serve on the WIAA's sport medical advisory committee. While the requirements of that rule do allow access to an opportunity, which is required by federal law, those requirements permit access **only** after leveling the competitive playing field by requiring hormone suppression therapy treatment for a full year and/or sex reassignment surgery.

The WASB supports the autonomy of WIAA to govern itself and to determine regulations and standards for athletics and student eligibility while taking into account the input of its member schools. The WASB opposes legislative efforts to impose explicit or implicit mandates on the WIAA or its member schools.

**Provisions in this Bill Could Encourage Students and Parents to Sue Their Local School Districts.**

The bill would permit a pupil who is deprived of the opportunity to participate in an athletic sport or on an athletic team or who suffers any direct or indirect harm as the result of school district not following the provisions of the bill to bring a cause of action against the district for injunctive relief, damages, and any other relief available under law.

This is especially troubling given that this bill places school boards in a situation where they risk a potential federal lawsuit by complying with state law as imposed by this bill and risk a potential state lawsuit under the provisions of this bill by complying with federal agency interpretations of federal law. All lawsuits, whether they have legal merit or not, must be defended. That costs money, which is better spent educating students.

**This Bill Puts School Boards in a Difficult Position.**

This bill would essentially force a school district to limit a transgender female student's participation in such a way that could be seen by current federal authorities as discriminating against that student.

While this bill would change state law, it would not change federal law (in this case, Title IX). Under Title IX, "[n]o person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal Financial assistance." 20 U.S. C. §1681(a).

The U.S. Department of Justice circulated a memo in 2021 to federal agencies stating its interpretation of the application of the U.S. Supreme Court's June 2020 decision in Bostock v. Clayton County to Title IX:

"After considering the text of Title IX, Supreme Court caselaw, and developing jurisprudence in this area, the Division has determined that the best reading of Title IX's prohibition on discrimination "on the basis of sex" is that it includes discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation."

Title IX creates a private cause of action that entitles parents and guardians of students to sue a school district for monetary damages on the basis that the school district has discriminated against a student based on sex.

Should this bill pass, a school board would face a choice to comply with the provisions of this bill, and risk being sued under federal law or to not follow state law and risk being sued by a student or the parent or guardian of a student.

In addition, the Office of Civil Rights (or OCR) within the U.S. Department of Education, which enforces civil rights laws, such as Title IX, in public schools is authorized to bring enforcement actions against school districts. At various times in the recent past, the OCR has been very active in targeting its resources on transgender students' claims of discrimination.

In past enforcement actions against school districts, the OCR has made it clear that it has the power not only

to bring enforcement actions against school districts but to come after all federal funds received by a district found to be in violation of Title IX.

It is important to note that:

- Nothing in this bill would protect or insulate a school district against becoming the subject of a lawsuit brought under either of these two legal avenues.
- Nothing in this bill would indemnify a school district for the costs of defending such a lawsuit or enforcement action.
- Nothing in this bill would indemnify a school district against any damages that might be awarded in such a lawsuit or against the loss of federal funding in an enforcement action such as is described above.
- Nothing in this bill would require the state Attorney General or the state Department of Justice to defend a school district sued on the basis of discrimination under a Title IX action.

For the reasons cited above, the WASB *opposes* Assembly Bill 377.

**guy john halcón, M.S.**  
**Regarding AB 377**  
**October 4th, 2023**

My name is guy and I am a concerned resident of Wisconsin. I am unable to attend this week's public hearings due to illness, so **I am providing this as written testimony in opposition of Assembly Bill 377.**

**I am a disabled, transgender Latino who came to this state to learn and grow, with hopes of improving the experiences of all of our students.** I just started my PhD Program with the Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis (ELPA) at UW-Madison this fall after completing my masters degree; I also studied law here the last three years and only have a written project to submit to officially have my Juris Doctor. I helped represent disabled students who experienced discrimination while in school - free of charge. I have worked in school districts in three different states, including here. I was a fellow with the UW System Administration this summer prior to moving on to my current role as a Teacher's Assistant for an undergrad class. I was also the Gleason/Kettel Fellow this summer, and had my time with Fair Wisconsin funded by the Williams Institute out of UCLA Law. I am beyond grateful for all of these opportunities that I've had, but **I would not be where I am today without all of the support I have received from people who see and love me for me. Being supported in all of my authenticity has brought me a level of joy and success that all trans people deserve, joy and success that bills like AB 377 aim to hinder.**

Assembly Bill 377 maliciously strips away a student's identity, tells a child that they have no control over their body or sense of self, and discriminatorily prohibits the child from a truly holistic and healthy enrollment at their school. In the context of our public schools, AB 377 forces a child to either fight through the torture of not being seen as their true self and fight through the harm that comes from living a life that isn't their own - or be denied the social, academic, and personal benefits provided by publicly funded tax dollars while being ostracized as 'illegal' under the language of the Bill. No one, let alone a child, should have to decide between living authentically or accessing something that is meant to be accessible to all.

**What I haven't mentioned already was that I was a Division 1 athlete my first year of college prior to retiring. I can say without a doubt that track and field saved my life in high school.** I was in so much pain in high school that I couldn't explain to others - but when the final bell rang I knew I had a place to be where I could throw out some of that pain. I didn't have the language to explain my gender back then, but the kids that AB

377 targets do. Assembly Bill 377 would punish trans\* youth for simply understanding their own existence and would forbid these children from participating in something that has the potential to be healing and life-changing - sports.

Additionally, the text of AB 377 sets up the stage for constant litigation, disproportionate impact and harm for Black and Brown girls (cis and trans\*), and the defunding of public education in Wisconsin. This is not about supporting girls - what girls do the authors of this Bill aim to support or 'defend'? Black and Brown girls are more likely to experience harassment for not conforming to 'female' expectations. If a White girl sues a school because she is rightfully pulled out of a game for harassment after claiming a Black girl is trans, what does the Assembly propose happens? If a Latina files a complaint with OCR because she is being targeted and questioned by other athletes for being 'too masculine', what will happen next? If our public schools start to lose more funding and we shift to a privatization of schools, all children who are marginalized, whether because of ethnicity, race, disability, status as emergent bilingual, gender, sexuality, and/or otherwise, will be at the hands of private school law decisions which increasingly have permitted discrimination/exclusion. This is not about supporting girls - AB 377 uses trans\* children, especially trans girls, in a strategic effort to dismantle public education.

To my final point, how does the Assembly see this ban being executed? Will each and every member who votes to pass the Bill be the one to demand a child's genitals and birth certificates be checked? Do voting members realize that closed birth certificate changes are possible in some states for minors and that students might move here from other states? Do voting members understand the implications this Bill has for FERPA and student privacy rights?

The first class I took in the ELPA Department was on Psychology and Coaching, with my final paper centered around servant leadership and better supporting LGBTQ2S+ student athletes. And here we are as a community and a state facing bills that would ban a number of these athletes from competing safely and authentically. 'Let kids be kids' includes trans kids. Let Trans Kids Play. Let Trans Girls Be Girls, Let Trans Boys Be Boys. Let All Of Our Children Be The Most Authentic Version of Themselves.

Thank you to those who have considered this testimony in its entirety. **Please vote against Assembly Bill 377 and all other anti-trans bills.**

To the Members of the Committee,

I'm writing to state my opposition to the Assembly Bill 377 K-12 Athlete Ban. I'm a teacher at the Madison Public Schools as well as a mother. I see firsthand how sports make a difference in the lives of the youth. I see how much sports can build a kid's confidence in their athletic abilities. I see how kids learn how to work together, build communication skills, and grow friendships in their team. These are opportunities that should be available for all kids. Denying trans kids access takes away these opportunities to be active, to have fun, and to be a kid! Please oppose this K-12 Athlete Bill and give kids a chance to be a kid!

Anne Seeber  
Madison, WI  
53704



Dear Committee on Education,

I am writing in strong opposition to AB377. This bill is not based on science or compassion, but instead disinformation and transphobia. Numerous peer reviewed studies have shown the minimal to non-existent advantages of trans athletes in competition with their cis peers. All these bills will do is isolate and vilify a vulnerable community, especially as participation in sports has been shown to have numerous social, physical, and emotional benefits.

Sincerely,

Soleil Young

526 W Washington Ave.

Apt 3B

Madison WI 53703

To the members of the committee,

I am writing as a teacher, coach, former student-athlete and soccer mom to voice my opposition to AB 377. All kids, including transgender and nonbinary youth, should be allowed to participate on sports teams which best align with their gender.

As a middle and high school girl growing up in La Crosse public schools, I did it all: softball, track, soccer, tennis, basketball, volleyball. I credit a lot of my healthy habits as an adult to the foundations I built as a student-athlete - physical well-being, self-confidence, lasting friendships, challenging limits, healthy competition, perseverance, and humility. School itself wasn't always a good fit for me, but I was given space to be myself in sports. No one questioned my right to join any team. My coaches and teammates pushed me to give all I had athletically, and they saw me for who I was.

Now that I'm a teacher, coach, and parent, I see with new eyes how sports can be such a critical piece of a kid's life in the same ways. Much to my surprise, my own child came out as trans between our fall and spring soccer seasons when they were in kindergarten. Like any 10-year-old who wants to play, they want to have fun with their friends, and they thrive on the feeling of accomplishment when they master a new skill or work together with their teammates to score a goal.

Please, do not legislate the exclusion of my child: Vote no on AB 377. Discrimination and exclusion have absolutely no place in our schools, on our courts, or on our fields. Trans kids, like kids of all genders, deserve access to play school sports. Trans boys are boys. Trans girls are girls. Non-binary kids are non-binary. Let them be kids, and let them play.

Sincerely,  
Katie Hayden  
Madison, WI 53716

Caitlin Benedetto  
Regarding AB 377  
3 October 2023

My name is Caitlin Benedetto, and I am a Madison, Wisconsin, resident. I am testifying in opposition to bill AB 377. This bill is harmful to transgender students in Wisconsin, as well as their family and community members.

If passed, this bill will restrict transgender students from playing on sports teams that align with their gender identity, and it will make them feel unwelcome in their schools and among their peers. Research tells us that transgender children are safer, happier, and healthier when their gender identity is affirmed. For K-12 students, affirmation can look like letting trans girls play sports with cis girls and letting trans boys play sports with cis boys.

Athletics are meant to teach kids teamwork, discipline, and confidence, and it is discriminatory and wrong to cut transgender kids off from these benefits by barring them from playing on the teams that fit their gender. I am testifying that this discriminatory bill should not be passed. Transgender kids belong with their peers. They deserve to play sports on teams that will make them feel included instead of singled out and ostracized.

Thank you for considering this testimony. I urge you to reject this bill and recognize that allowing trans children to play on teams with their same-gender peers will be hugely beneficial to them, to their teammates, and to their communities as a whole. Trans children belong.

Thank you,  
Caitlin Benedetto

My name is Shanon Bartel, a concerned Dane County citizen and mother of three. I am writing testimony to oppose bill AB 377 the K-12 Athlete Ban will negatively impact the already marginalized minority of our adolescents.

I am really baffled at why this issue is even up for debate. Only around 2% of our state's middle through high school students identify as transgender/nonbinary, and not all of those 2% even participate in sports. There is such a small amount of trans athletes why are we even having this discussion? This is a complete and utter witch hunt, waste of taxpayer's money and ultimately another way for Republicans to divert focus away from issues that impact Wisconsinites.

There is a fear that somehow suddenly girls will have a disadvantage out on the field, but guess what? Disadvantages already exist. Some females are born with extra testosterone; some are born from a set of really tall parents, some born from parents who were/are professional athletes. People have advantages for a variety of reasons and this is no different. Are we going to start levelling the playing field by making girls take hormone tests, or only girls of certain heights can play basketball or volleyball? And I don't hear anyone complaining if the trans person is FTM (female to male). This last one I know firsthand because I have a FTM child, who competed in middle and high school football and no one cared.

Let the very few of these transgender athletes play where they belong. Contrary to what you believe this is a non-issue, brought to the surface by a party hoping to capitalize on the fear of its constituents. Stop playing high school referee and focus on those issues that matter to the majority of Wisconsinites-taxes, safety, education, inflation, etc.

I would like to thank the committee for taking the time to read my testimony. I hope you get back to the real issues our state faces.

My name is Jaxon Seeger I was born and raised in central WI (Wausau) currently residing in Milwaukee WI. I am not only someone who identifies as transgender and queer but I am an advocate, organizer, and activist.

I am the founder of Wausau Transfam Alliance which is a support and political advocacy group that I started in 2017 after I was physically assaulted and left for dead at my place of employment.

I'm writing today in regard to bills AB 378, AB 377, and AB 465.

These bills won't do what you're hoping they will only do more harm to an already harmed community.

The trans community already faces countless disparities including but not limited to low income, inadequate health care, and extreme violence due to how we identify.

I want to point out 5 names that you may or may not recognize.

- **Brazil Johnson**

- **Mya Allen**

- **Toi Davis**

- **Dedrick Cross**

- **Cashay Henderson**

The 5 names are all transgender women from Wisconsin who have been violently murdered in the past year alone.

That was WITHOUT these bills. The passing of these bills will not only show your public constituents that the anti-trans rhetoric that you feel so educated to speak on is okay, but that the escalation in violence against this already marginalized community is not only tolerated but accepted.

Gender-Affirming Care is life saving care. Take it from someone who nearly didn't make it past the age of 17 due to not being able to express that they were trans without the fear of their safety. At age 17 I was a closeted transgender youth who attempted to take my life because I couldn't see myself ever being able to come out and transition using hormone replacement therapy. I died twice on October 3rd 2015 and my parents were told I wouldn't make it through the night as I had multiple organ failure and was in a coma.

At the age of 18 I was finally able to come out as trans and start hormone replacement therapy after going through countless exams and hours of gender therapy to ensure that I was in fact trans and in need of this lifesaving treatment.

Flash forward to today October 4th 2023 I'm 25 years old now, I work at an LGBT community center as a director, I'm a student double majoring in Women & Gender Studies and Community Education & Engagement, and I'm a social justice organizer/activist in my free time.

My point is, is that being able to start hormone replacement therapy saved my life and most likely would have prevented my attempt if I had, had someone to advocate for me.

With that being said I want to remind each of you that when you took your oath, you promised to protect all communities and not only those you saw as "worthy".

These bills, once passed will be detrimental to the WI Transgender Community and specifically our youth.

These bills will destroy lives and at the end of the day if you pass them the blood will be on your hands with no one else to blame.

It's with this reminder that I urge you to do what is what not for me but for our youth, for my classmates who identify as trans and participate in sports, for those who have been disowned due to their gender identity.

At the end of the day we all just want to survive, we deserve to survive. We deserve the same rights as everyone else and we will not rest until our existence is debated by individuals who think they know what's best for us and our children.

-Thank you

**Best,**

*Jaxon Asher Seeger*

*They/Them He/Him*

Blair Gunovich  
Madison, WI 53711

Dear Representatives Kitchens and Dittrich, and the Wisconsin Assembly  
Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Assembly Bill 377, which aims to segregate trans and cis youth athletes within Wisconsin's education system. After reviewing the contents of the proposed legislation, I am deeply concerned about its potential impact on our community, and I urge you to reconsider support for this bill.

Transgender and non-binary people, in particular trans and non-binary student athletes, are under attack by politicians at all levels of government, as well as in the media. In 2023 alone, 574 anti-trans bills in 49 states have been introduced.

Young people learn many important life lessons in sports: leadership, confidence, self-respect, self-discipline, what it means to be part of a team, and much more. Sports and athletics are an important part of education—something no child should be denied simply because of who they are. Transgender kids, like other students, deserve the same chances to learn teamwork, sportsmanship, leadership and self-discipline, and to build a sense of belonging with their peers. When we tell transgender girls that they can't play girls' sports—or transgender boys that they can't play boys' sports—they miss out on this important childhood experience and all the lessons it teaches.

Transgender kids want the opportunity to play sports for the same reason other kids do: to be a part of a team where they feel like they belong. We shouldn't discriminate against kids and ban them from playing because they're transgender. As a nation, we decided long ago that discrimination is wrong and that everyone should have the same opportunities to succeed in life—and that should include transgender youth.

I urge you to support public health and LGBTQ+ rights and oppose AB 377.  
Thank you for your attention.

Blair Gunovich

Amelia Hansen

Regarding Wisconsin Legislature

October 3rd, 2023

My name is Amelia Hansen, and I am a concerned Wisconsin resident, voter, and taxpayer, and biology graduate student at UW-Madison. I am testifying to oppose Assembly Bill 377 (K-12 Athlete Ban).

Based on actions that other states have taken to take away trans people's rights, we know that this bill only serves as a stepping stone for banning trans healthcare altogether, which is in direct opposition to scientific literature and the most recent WPATH standards of care.

This bill is not based on science and sense, but fear and prejudice. Numerous peer reviewed studies have shown the life-saving effects of trans healthcare, and the minimal to non-existent advantages of trans athletes in competition with their cis peers. All this bill will do is isolate and vilify a vulnerable community.

Thank you for reading my testimony, and please oppose Assembly Bill 377.

Sincerely,

Amelia Hansen

(she/her)

Hello Committee on Education,

My name is Megan Spielbauer Sandate, and I am a queer Madison resident. I am testifying to state my opposition to AB 377 and make clear why I think that moving this piece of legislation forward will be harmful to all students but particularly trans and nonbinary students.

I want to explain that one of the most harmful experiences that I have had was attending a counterprotest to a TERF, or "Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminist" conference. The hatred for trans people and children was so palpable; it is terrifying to know what these women could do in their independent spaces to harm trans and nonbinary students based on their behavior at the event. Additionally, I was devastated talking with trans and nonbinary youth during and after the event who felt like they should have done more as if they should have ever had to defend their own existence in the first place.

This is why I encourage you to strike down this bill. This bill is not rooted in science but fear and hatred. Politicians and others are scapegoating and vilifying the trans community in order to push an agenda of "family values" or morality. There is nothing moral about forcing people, particularly children, to claim a gendered identity that is not their own. Students should be able to play sports and participate in their schools in a fashion that is honest to who they are.

Thank you,  
Megan Spielbauer Sandate  
She/They



From: **Jenny Bratburd** <bratburdj@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 9:17 AM  
Subject: testimony for AB377  
To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Hello,

I am writing in opposition to AB377 (K-12 Athlete Ban). When I was growing up as a young girl not so long ago, I loved playing basketball at any chance I had. Sports was an opportunity to build teamwork, friendship, and exercise. Growing up in youth sports, the imbalances in skill and growth spurts played much more of a role than simply sex itself. To insist that women and girls are always weaker or worse at all sports than men and boys is also insulting and discourages many girls (both cisgender and transgender) from playing. This bill does nothing to protect youth, and creates a harmful environment for all transgender people, and makes it harder to encourage girls to play sports. For those reason, I urge the committee to vote against this bill.

Thank you,  
Jenny Bratburd

From: **Jen Boehm** <jenboehm2981@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 9:25 AM  
Subject: AB 377  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Jen Boehm. I am 42 years old with one child in college and one child in K-12. I am a lifelong resident of the state of Wisconsin. I'm a registered nurse and future nurse practitioner.

I strongly oppose AB 377. There should be no ban on any person from fully participating in society. If a transgender person wants to play sports, we should let them.

Please stop legislating our state with bigotry and start being inclusive.

Sincerely,  
Jen Boehm

333 West Tyler Ave  
Eau Claire, WI 54701

From: **Michael Waupoose** <waupoose@att.net>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 9:38 AM  
Subject: AB 377  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Dear Committee on Education,  
Re: AB Bill 377

Please do not support this bill. LGBTQ rights are human rights. We are humans. We would appreciate being treated as such.

Sincerely,  
Michael Waupoose

“One day I will be an ancestor and I want my descendants to know that I used my voice so that they could have a future.”  
~ Autumn Peltier

From: **Christopher Guse** <chrisguse@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 9:42 AM  
Subject: Opposition to Assembly Bill 377  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

To: Assembly Committee on Education

I am writing to voice my opposition to Assembly Bill 377. As the parent of a transgender, non-binary person, I can attest that the introduction of this bill is harmful to trans youth. We need to be lifting up our children and celebrating diversity. It takes a huge amount of courage for them to live authentically and to transition from the gender assigned at birth. The government has no place in making decisions about how they can live their lives, and whether or not they deserve to participate in sports.

I am a lifelong resident of Wisconsin and am disgusted to see the introduction of bills that threaten transgender youth's existence and identity.

Sincerely,

Chris Guse  
[chrisguse@gmail.com](mailto:chrisguse@gmail.com)  
Shorewood, WI 53211

From: **Lenard Markman** <lenmarkman@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 9:58 AM  
Subject: Committee on Aging AB377  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

We oppose this bill. We have been in family medicine for 25 years in rural WI.

We believe all children and young adults should be able to participate in sports according to the gender they identify with.

The fun, fitness, and friendships of athletic activities should be available to all who are interested. This bill inhibits participation and incorrectly assumes that ability is based on biological sex and the gender assigned at birth.

This bill has far reaching discriminatory implications for many individuals and opens up the door to expensive, embarrassing, and non confidential testing.

Sincerely,

Drs Lenard and Leslie Markman  
4008 Tomorrow River Road  
Amherst WI 54406

Sent from my iPhone

From: **Nicole Morgan** <nicolemorgan86@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 10:03 AM  
Subject: Testimony Against AB 377  
To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

To the Committee on Education:

My name is Nicole Morgan, and I live in Madison. I urge you to oppose AB `377.

Trans and non-binary athletes are not a threat to their sports or their competitors. I have played sports with many trans athletes, and have not found that they had any inherent advantages over anyone else, nor did I ever encounter anyone one "turning trans to infiltrate a sport so they could win", as many like to fearmonger. The teams that I was on with trans and non-binary athletes were rich with love, friendship, and teamwork. The experience of playing in K-12 sports should not be taken away from trans athletes.

Nicole Morgan  
4921 Spaanem Ave,  
Madison, WI 53716

From: **Sarah Ghazi-Moradi** <sghazimoradi7@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 10:10 AM  
Subject: Opposition to trans athlete ban k-12  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Dear Committee on Education,

My name is Sarah Ghazi-Moradi, and I live on 5909 Sharpsburg Dr., here in Madison, Wi. I am writing to you today to state my opposition to creating a ban on trans athletes at the K-12 level. I am very disheartened and disappointed to see this kind of transphobic legislation in Wisconsin, and I urge you to not pass such legislature here. I am a cisgender woman, and I have never felt threatened by the participation of trans women in athletics. First and foremost, trans athletes make up such a small portion of our population – this is not a pervasive threat to the sanctity of elementary athletics. Secondly, I recognize and I encourage this Committee to also recognize the pervasiveness of transphobia and transphobic legislation that has been rising across the nation. Trans individuals face a heightened degree of violence and systemic oppression, and efforts like this only increase the violence trans individuals will face by continuing to marginalize them. Finally, I condemn such an over reach of government powers into determining which students can participate in athletics. Such decision should be based entirely on a student and their coaches.

A ban on trans students in athletics also runs afoul of countless civil rights cases which ensure protections for trans, queer, and non-binary students. Discrimination against trans students is no different from discrimination on the basis of gender, a well enshrined principle in Wisconsin and federal law. In short, this is a stain on our democracy, and I am certain that most Wisconsinites would agree.

Thank you,

Sarah Ghazi-Moradi

From: **Amy Kortbein** <ashermankortbein@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 10:11 AM  
Subject: Against AB 378, AB 377, AB465  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>  
Cc: <Sen.Hesselbein@legis.wi.gov>, <Rep.Joers@legis.wisconsin.gov>

To The State of Wisconsin Legislators-

As a resident of Wisconsin and a regular voter I am disgusted to see our legislature once again taking up bills with the intent to harm young people in a gross attempt to drum up outrage.

These discriminatory bills have no basis in science, healthcare or common decency. They are cruel and divisive.

Young people, particularly young people who are in a minority deserve our support and compassion.

The transgender people I know are kind, thoughtful and considerate. They want nothing more than to go about their lives. To work, play, be educated and be a part of our society without being harassed or discriminated against.

Be on the right side of history. Show compassion and decency rather than discrimination and cruelty.

Vote no on AB 378, AB 377, AB465.

Thank you,  
Amy Kortbein  
7333 South Ave  
Middleton, WI 53562

Amy Sherman-Kortbein  
Realtor  
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From: **Rita Hiram** <rehirami@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 10:13 AM  
Subject: Testimony against Anti-Trans Bills  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

To Whom It May Concern,

I am testifying in strong opposition to AB 378, AB 377, and AB 465. Trans people deserve to live full lives as their authentic selves, and that includes having access to gender-affirming care and being able to play sports in ways that match their identities.

On a personal level, I have played volleyball for over 15 years, played competitive volleyball on women's teams throughout all of high school, and was captain of my varsity volleyball team my senior year. As a cisgender woman, I am who the sports ban bills are purporting to protect. However, I outright reject these bills.

These bills would have done nothing to make me feel safer or bettered my experience playing competitive volleyball. It is the nature of playing sports that people have different backgrounds, different skills, and different advantages coming into the sport. For example, height is a real advantage in volleyball, and I played against cisgender women who were 4'11" and who were 6'3" at the same age (16 years old). That's just the way that it is - these kind of differences happen, and the competition simply made me want to play better. The attempt to try to control all variables by not letting trans women play women's sports is futile and an extremely misguided attempt of achieving "justice." Conversely, one of the joys of playing sports is getting to have a shared experience with people who are different from you. These bills should not stand.

Rita Hiram  
Madison, WI, 53703

From: **Stella Furlano** <sfurlano@uwalumni.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 10:20 AM  
Subject: AB 377, K-12 Athlete Ban  
To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Dear Committee on Education,

My name is Stella J. Furlano, and I live at 419 W. Doty St. Apt. 1, here in Madison, Wi. I am writing to you today to state my opposition to creating a ban on trans athletes at the K-12 level. I am very disheartened and disappointed to see this kind of transphobic legislation in Wisconsin, and I urge you to not pass such legislation here. I am a cisgender woman, and I have never felt threatened by the participation of trans women in athletics. First and foremost, trans athletes make up such a small portion of our population – this is not a pervasive threat to the sanctity of elementary athletics. Secondly, I recognize and I encourage this Committee to also recognize the pervasiveness of transphobia and transphobic legislation that has been rising across the nation. Trans individuals face a heightened degree of violence and systemic oppression, and efforts like this only increase the violence trans individuals will face by continuing to marginalize them. Finally, I condemn such an overreach of government powers into determining which students can participate in athletics. Such a decision should be based entirely on a student and their coaches.

A ban on trans students in athletics also runs afoul of countless civil rights cases which ensure protections for trans, queer, and non-binary students. Discrimination against trans students is no different from discrimination on the basis of gender, a well enshrined principle in Wisconsin and federal law. In short, this is a stain on our democracy, and I am certain that most Wisconsinites would agree.

Thank you,

Stella J. Furlano

From: **Liz Lusk** <lizlusk51@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 10:24 AM

Subject: Complete hateful Actions against Transgender Students Assembly Bills (AB378, AB 377, AB 465

To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Dear legislators,

These are ugly bills. I hope that when you learn about both the state of legal requirements currently in place as well as learning about the harm these bills would do - you will, you must withdraw these transgressive bills.

Initially, I wonder where you are getting your current information? Clearly your information is not based on medical information which clearly does NOT support these bills. Where is it coming from?

Do you know the current WIAA policies? They are linked below and are fair. Why are you asking to change them?

Do you know, or have you ever known a transgender athlete?

Have you ever personally even known a transgender student or young person?

Before considering this legislation ask yourself these questions and add to your knowledge base.

Realize as well as that there are not a great many transgender students and that they are the most bullied students in our school systems. Because of this they are much more likely to be physically harmed - in schools and even just in public places. These bills would multiply the harms they already face.

They, our transgender students and families of transgender students deserve protection not hate. These laws are perpetuating hate.

Check out the current WIAA rules (attached). What would a reasonable person who is, of course interested in fairness to all athletes change in this policy? It's solid. Trust the people who have been put in place to assure fairness and the work they have produced. [WIAA Transgender Participation Policy](#)

Transgender students are our most vulnerable students. Because of the kind of hate that these bills engender - transgender youth would be denied the ability to exist as full human beings in our most precious institutions - public schools and medical care.

Stop this hate. You have many tough issues to work on in Wisconsin, which should be your priorities - healthcare, care for the aging, childcare, protecting our youth from assault rifles in schools, providing us all with clean drinking water - I can go on and on. Instead, these bills pick on the most vulnerable in our society. How about doing some real legislative work that addresses the needs of the people?

Stop playing politics with our children. Support them, don't destroy them.

Sincerely,  
Liz Lusk

From: **Sarah Klein** <startjumpin@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 10:27 AM  
Subject: Testimony  
To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Hello. I am writing as a life long Wisconsin resident against the Trans Athlete Ban and the Trans Medical Care Ban.

This bills would be harmful for all the trans residents who live in Wisconsin. I am against AB 378, AB 377, and AB 465.

Please direct these funds towards issues of improving public schools, improving air and water quality. Please allow trans people to live their lives as they want to.

Thanks  
Sarah Klein  
Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: **Liz Jones** <ljones111966@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 11:21 AM  
Subject: my testimony to OPPOSE AB377  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

**You can still submit written testimony to [testimony@fairwisconsin.com](mailto:testimony@fairwisconsin.com). Be sure to address the email to the entire committee and include your name, address, and a brief statement describing your opposition to the bill.**

**Edit this with information you need to make your opposition to this bill known:**

Good morning, Committee on Colleges and Universities Members Representative Murphy, Rep. Nedweski, Rep. Moses, Rep. Wittke, Rep. Krug, Rep. Goeben, Rep. Schutt, Rep. S. Johnson, Rep. Michalski, Rep. O'Connor, Rep. Emerson, Rep. Stubbs, Rep. Joers, Rep. Shankland, Rep. J. Anderson,

I, Elizabeth Jones, am a neighbor to your district and am a parent to LGBTQ individual.

I care about this because it is absolutely unnecessary to propose such a bill, that limits freedoms to a large community, for a phantom threat that only serves to incite culture wars.

As a member of this community I urge you to OPPOSE AB 378 as it is likely to negatively impact the well-being of my community members, cause harm to young learners in my school district, create a hostile atmosphere for LGBTQ+ individuals in our community, curtail learning opportunities for young learners, and exile some of the most under-resourced members of our community.

I know you share in my care for this community's well-being and will do the right thing representing us when you OPPOSE AB 378 today. Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Jones  
208 Golden Maple Road  
Madison, WI 53718

From: **Isabelle Marceau** <isabelle@stdunstans.com>  
Date: Tue, Oct 3, 2023 at 8:06 PM  
Subject: AB377 Testimony  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

*Hello, I would like to submit this testimony for the subcommittee hearing about AB377. I hope it speaks to someone. Thank you for your time & effort. -Isa*

My name is Isabelle Marceau. I am the youth minister at St Dunstan's Episcopal Church on the west side of Madison. Every week, I have the distinct honor of spiritually guiding youth in my church community. I hear about school dances, sports tryouts, music and drama auditions, friendship issues, and grapplings with identity. It is a blessing to be trusted, to be sought out by youth in this day and age not just to be a set of ears, but to be a source of advice.

As a spiritual mentor, I do my utmost to understand the varying needs of the youth I am called to minister to. Housing, family, food, grades, sports, arts, friendships, all of it. I see how a well-rounded and -supported child can thrive in their various communities. Athletics, regardless of what specific activity it is, are extremely important to the development and fulfillment of every child. That is a place to learn responsibility, talent, skill, teamwork, leadership, acceptance, and community. By preventing any child from participating, it robs every child of that comprehensive experience. Your teammates are from varying backgrounds and that is a *good thing*. It is an irreplaceable opportunity to learn about one another's obstacles to be the best player, performer, and partner they can possibly.

I serve multiple transgender youth on a weekly basis and I understand how important their ability to participate and commit to team activities is. It helps them feel like they are a part of something bigger, like they belong. They tell me about tournaments, team parties, wins and losses, and the intense friendships they develop. For the well-being of every child, regardless of their sex or gender, I urge you to vote no on AB 377.

Friends, adults in positions of immense power, I ask you to take much more time and listen to the children and parents being affected by this ban. Do not rush and end up being reckless.

I will never win a faith argument against you, just like you will never win one against me. But we can come together with concern and respect for the children in our community and do the right thing: take time, patience, and care with these important decisions, like the good Lord has instructed us to do with one another. Please minister to our youth by providing them with well-rounded school and community experiences by voting no on AB377.

--

Isabelle Marceau | *she/they*  
**Youth Minister**  
[isabelle@stdunstans.com](mailto:isabelle@stdunstans.com)

From: **Jentsch, Amanda** <ajentsch@mcw.edu>  
Date: Tue, Oct 3, 2023 at 10:59 PM  
Subject: Opposition to AB 377  
To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

To the Committee on Education:

My name is Amanda Jentsch and I am a first-year medical student at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. My current residence is 7700 Portland Ave #306, Wauwatosa, WI, 53213. I am writing to you in opposition of AB 377.

I was born and raised in New Berlin, WI, the latest in several generations of proud Wisconsin rural farm families, and I graduated with honors this spring from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Below is my testimony, cowritten with the other members of WMS. Please feel free to reach out to me at this email address if you have further questions.

**Amanda Jentsch**

M.D. Candidate, MCW 2027

University of Wisconsin-Madison 2023

B.A. Biology, Anthropology, English

This proposal is riddled with inaccuracies that are not based in scientific fact, lack proper references and sources for the materials, is in direct contrast to current WMS policies and AMA policies, and is clearly based in bias. I have taken the time to address each whereas clauses inaccuracies as well as mentioning current WMS policies. **This policy will only hurt all children (those who are gender diverse and those who are not) if passed and should NOT be considered.**

**Whereas Clause Corrections with Evidence:**

Whereas, children may have gender uncertainty which resolves as they mature; -> This is incorrect information. First, "gender uncertainty" is an outdated term. Please refer to the article below published by the American Academy of Pediatrics for more proper language. In addition, this article clearly states that there are gender diverse children and adolescents (proper term for "gender uncertainty") are routinely in need of help due to stigmatization in society, laws and policies (like this one), and lack of healthcare access. Second, research from Pew Research Center clearly shows that gender diverse individuals are increasing in younger populations and young adult populations. This indicates that there is a growing proportion of children and adolescents identifying as gender diverse.

[https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/142/4/e20182162/37381/Ensuring-Comprehensive-Care-and-Support-for?\\_qa=2.166684408.772468797.1679707980-80357982.1677040861?autologincheck=redirected](https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/142/4/e20182162/37381/Ensuring-Comprehensive-Care-and-Support-for?_qa=2.166684408.772468797.1679707980-80357982.1677040861?autologincheck=redirected)

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/06/07/about-5-of-young-adults-in-the-u-s-say-their-gender-is-different-from-their-sex-assigned-at-birth/>

Whereas, in every state there are now springing up pediatric gender health clinics which prescribe "gender affirming" hormones, puberty blockers, and perform gender transition surgeries; -> This statement is incorrect. Tennessee actually just passed a full ban on gender-affirming care in minors, with many other states with similar proposed bills. These bans are in opposition to the AMA, American Academy of Pediatric, WHO, Endocrine Society, and many other medical and professional organizations,

[https://www.cnn.com/2023/03/03/politics/tennessee-gender-affirming-care/index.html#:~:text=Washington%20\(CNN\)%20Tennessee%20Gov.,wider%20Republican%20pushed%20effort%20nationwide.](https://www.cnn.com/2023/03/03/politics/tennessee-gender-affirming-care/index.html#:~:text=Washington%20(CNN)%20Tennessee%20Gov.,wider%20Republican%20pushed%20effort%20nationwide.)

<https://www.glaad.org/blog/medical-association-statements-supporting-trans-youth-healthcare-and-against-discriminatory>

<https://www.ama-assn.org/press-center/press-releases/ama-reinforces-opposition-restrictions-transgender-medical-care>

<https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/aap/2022/statement-from-the-american-academy-of-pediatrics-and-the-oklahoma-chapter-of-the-american-academy-of-pediatrics-on-gender-affirming-care#:~:text=Our%20organizations%20strongly%20oppose%20any,provision%20of%20gender%20affirming%20care.>

Whereas, these "treatments" may be irreversible resulting in sterilization; -> Again incorrect information. Gender affirming care and treatments actually exist on a spectrum. As outlined by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, "Gender-affirming care is a supportive form of healthcare. It consists of an array of services that may include medical, surgical, mental health, and non-medical services for transgender and nonbinary people.

For transgender and nonbinary children and adolescents, early gender-affirming care is crucial to overall health and well-being as it allows the child or adolescent to focus on social transitions and can increase their confidence while navigating the healthcare system." In addition, this is also addressed and outlined by the AAMC. This clearly shows that gender affirming care can be reversible.

<https://opa.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2022-03/gender-affirming-care-young-people-march-2022.pdf>

<https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/what-gender-affirming-care-your-questions-answered>

Whereas, these “treatments” may cause increased medical morbidity from stroke, heart disease, and cancer; -> Again, gender affirming care treatments are a spectrum, not all individuals undergo surgery or hormone therapy, and do not all result in these negative side effects. These outcomes are also seen with alcohol and tobacco use according to the CDC. Also, gender affirming care does not cause these increases. Those who have transitioned to the gender they identify with have similar risk of strokes as their transitioned gender, cardiovascular risks are thought to be driven by psychological stress (which this policy only adds to), and increased cancer risks are linked to behaviors and lack of adequate medical access (which this policy is trying to restrict). In addition, gender affirming care actually improves health outcomes, specifically mental health outcomes, according to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Columbia University Department of Psychiatry, AMA, University of Washington, and JAMA.

<https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/alcohol-use.htm#:~:text=Over%20time%2C%20excessive%20alcohol%20use,liver%20disease%2C%20and%20digestive%20problems.&text=Cancer%20of%20the%20breast%2C%20mouth,liver%2C%20colo>

[https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/health\\_effects/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/health_effects/index.htm)

[https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8907681/#:~:text=In%20contrast%2C%20a%20subsequent%20retrospective,4%20years\)%20%5B7%5D](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8907681/#:~:text=In%20contrast%2C%20a%20subsequent%20retrospective,4%20years)%20%5B7%5D)

<https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/full/10.1161/CIR.000000000001003>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5868281/>

<https://opa.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2022-03/gender-affirming-care-young-people-march-2022.pdf>

<https://www.columbiapsychiatry.org/news/gender-affirming-care-saves-lives>

<https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/population-care/understanding-short-term-impact-gender-affirming-care>

<https://epi.washington.edu/news/gender-affirming-hormones-and-puberty-blockers-improve-mental-health-in-transgender-youth/>

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2789423>

Whereas; mental health is not improved and suicide completion is higher after these “treatments;” -> Completely incorrect. Again, gender affirming care actually improves health outcomes, especially mental health outcomes, according to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Columbia University Department of Psychiatry, AMA, University of Washington, and JAMA.

<https://opa.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2022-03/gender-affirming-care-young-people-march-2022.pdf>

<https://www.columbiapsychiatry.org/news/gender-affirming-care-saves-lives>

<https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/population-care/understanding-short-term-impact-gender-affirming-care>

<https://epi.washington.edu/news/gender-affirming-hormones-and-puberty-blockers-improve-mental-health-in-transgender-youth/>

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2789423>

Whereas, the person may later regret going down the pathway to gender transition; -> This could be true for any medical procedure. This is generally due to a disconnect between expectations and outcomes. Also, gender affirming care regret is actually extremely low and even lower than common surgeries according to a Lancet study. It showed that 98% of trans youth who went through gender-affirming healthcare continue their treatment into adulthood. The 0.3% regret rate of our newest study is much smaller compared to other, common yet serious surgeries.

<https://ascopost.com/issues/january-25-2022/disconnect-between-expectations-and-outcomes-major-factor-in-treatment-related-regret-among-patients-with-localized-prostate-cancer/#:~:text=Overall%2C%2013%25%20of%20patients%20reported,and%207%25%20undergoing%20active%20surveillance>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28243695/>

<https://bmcprimcare.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12875-016-0558-0>

<https://www.gendergp.com/new-study-confirms-regret-rates-of-gender-affirming-surgery-are-non-existent/#:~:text=For%20instance%2C%20a%202022%20Lancet,other%2C%20common%20yet%20serious%20surgeries>

<https://www.gendergp.com/new-study-confirms-regret-rates-of-gender-affirming-surgery-are-non-existent/#:~:text=For%20instance%2C%20a%202022%20Lancet,other%2C%20common%20yet%20serious%20surgeries>

Whereas, gender transition may require expensive lifelong hormone treatments and ongoing consultations; -> Again, gender affirming care is a spectrum, making this statement incorrect. Even with hormone therapy and ongoing consultations, we also see this in all aspects of medicine.

[https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/142/4/e20182162/37381/Ensuring-Comprehensive-Care-and-Support-for?\\_ga=2.166684408.772468797.1679707980-80357982.1677040861?autologincheck=redirected](https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/142/4/e20182162/37381/Ensuring-Comprehensive-Care-and-Support-for?_ga=2.166684408.772468797.1679707980-80357982.1677040861?autologincheck=redirected)

[https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/142/4/e20182162/37381/Ensuring-Comprehensive-Care-and-Support-for?\\_ga=2.166684408.772468797.1679707980-80357982.1677040861?autologincheck=redirected](https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/142/4/e20182162/37381/Ensuring-Comprehensive-Care-and-Support-for?_ga=2.166684408.772468797.1679707980-80357982.1677040861?autologincheck=redirected)

Whereas, schools are supporting the view that biological males are actually female and vice versa; and that gender confused persons are likely to commit suicide unless doctors give them drugs and even remove body parts; -> This is just biased and unfounded information. Wisconsin does not actually have any required sexual education and if there is sexual education does not require education on gender diversity. Sexual education in Wisconsin also does not follow Federal or National recommendations, which hurts all children. In addition, gender diverse individuals have biological and physical alignments with the gender they identify as. Again,



mental health outcomes improve with gender affirming care. Not sure why the authors included this whereas clause, as it is in direct opposition to a previous whereas clause.

<https://sexeducationcollaborative.org/states/wisconsin#:~:text=State%20Sex%20Education%20Policies%20and,required%20to%20pr ovide%20STD%20education.>

[https://siecus.org/state\\_profile/wisconsin-fy21-state-profile/](https://siecus.org/state_profile/wisconsin-fy21-state-profile/)

[https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/policy/pdf/summary\\_report\\_factsheets/Wisconsin.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/policy/pdf/summary_report_factsheets/Wisconsin.pdf)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8955456/>

Whereas; we may look back at this in shame and horror; -> There is a long history of physicians, medical organizations, and nations doing things that in retrospect are considered "shameful and horrible." Unlike those, gender affirming care is a spectrum and there is a very common process that requires multiple steps. Again, the Lancet study clearly points out that gender affirming care has less regret than common surgeries. Why would we look back on this in shame and horror, when the data and outcomes show improvements?

<https://www.kff.org/other/issue-brief/youth-access-to-gender-affirming-care-the-federal-and-state-policy-landscape/>

<https://www.lgbtqihealtheducation.org/collection/trans-pediatric-care-toolkit/>

<https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/142/4/e20182162/37381/Ensuring-Comprehensive-Care-and-Support-for>

<https://www.uwhealth.org/services/gender-services>

Whereas, physicians should strive to do no harm; -> Physicians actually have the potential to do a lot of harm when providing proper patient care. I have included links to the side effects of many common drugs: lisinopril, birth control, levothyroxine, atorvastatin, acetaminophen plus hydrocodone, etc...

We give patients medical care with a risk and benefits model in mind, with the potential of doing harm with everything we do. **In the setting of gender affirming care, I have shown in the previous whereas clause corrections that gender affirming care is providing patients with improved health outcomes which is what we should want for all of our patients no matter who they are.**

<https://www.nhs.uk/medicines/lisinopril/side-effects-of-lisinopril/>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/combination-birth-control-pills/about/pac-20385282>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements/levothyroxine-oral-route/side-effects/drug-20072133>

<https://www.nhs.uk/medicines/atorvastatin/side-effects-of-atorvastatin/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/medicines/metformin/side-effects-of-metformin/>

[https://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements/hydrocodone-and-acetaminophen-oral-route/precautions/drug-](https://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements/hydrocodone-and-acetaminophen-oral-route/precautions/drug-20074089#:~:text=This%20medicine%20may%20cause%20adrenal,tiredness%20or%20weakness%2C%20or%20vomiting.)

[20074089#:~:text=This%20medicine%20may%20cause%20adrenal,tiredness%20or%20weakness%2C%20or%20vomiting.](https://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements/hydrocodone-and-acetaminophen-oral-route/precautions/drug-20074089#:~:text=This%20medicine%20may%20cause%20adrenal,tiredness%20or%20weakness%2C%20or%20vomiting.)

Relevant AMA Policy:

<https://policysearch.ama-assn.org/policyfinder/search/gender%20affirming%20care/relevant/1/>

**Relevant WMS Policy:**

**WOM-010 Third Party Interference in Medical Decision Making:** The Wisconsin Medical Society opposes the imposition of civil and criminal penalties or other retaliatory efforts against physicians, patients, patient advocates, healthcare workers, and health systems for providing, referring patients to, assisting in, or receiving evidence-based reproductive health services. The Society affirms that government and other third-party interference in evidence-based medical care compromises the sanctity of the physician-patient relationship and undermines the provision of quality health care, and opposes any government regulation or legislative action which would criminalize physicians for providing evidence-based medical care within the accepted standard of care according to nationally recognized professional practice guidelines and the scope of a physician's training and professional judgment. (BOD, 0922)

**PUB-042 Suicide Prevention:** The Wisconsin Medical Society recognizes the high and increasing suicide rates nationally and in the State of Wisconsin and strongly supports efforts to prevent suicide and attempted suicide. The following populations are at an increased risk for suicide in Wisconsin: residing in northern and western regions of the state, age 45-54, white, male, having less than a high school diploma, divorced, of veteran status, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT), having a mental health or substance abuse history, having a history of suicide attempts or disclosing an intent to die. The Society supports the following efforts to prevent suicide:

1. Target individuals, families and communities, specifically higher-risk populations, with appropriate primary and secondary prevention strategies and programs.
  - a. Integrate and coordinate suicide prevention activities across multiple sectors and settings.
  - b. Implement evidence-based communication efforts designed to prevent suicide by changing knowledge, attitudes and behaviors.
  - c. Increase knowledge of the factors that offer protection from suicidal behaviors and that promote wellness and recovery.
  - d. Promote responsible portrayals of mental illness and suicide in social media, the entertainment industry and online.
  - e. Promote efforts to reduce access to lethal means of suicide among individuals with identified suicide risk.
2. Promote and use evidence-based clinical interventions and programs that can improve mental health, behavioral health and interpersonal relationships.
  - a. Develop, implement and monitor effective programs that promote wellness and prevent suicide and related behaviors.

- b. Provide training to community and clinical service providers on the prevention of suicide and related behaviors.
  - c. Promote suicide prevention as a core component of health care services.
  - d. Promote and implement effective clinical and professional practices for assessing and treating those identified as being at risk for suicidal behaviors.
2. Encourage continued surveillance, research and evaluation into suicide prevention efforts.
    - a. Increase the timeliness and usefulness of national surveillance systems relevant to suicide prevention and improve the ability to collect, analyze and use this information for action.
    - b. Evaluate the impact and effectiveness of suicide prevention interventions and systems and synthesize and disseminate findings. (HOD, 0416)

**INS-057 Transgender Inclusive Health Insurance:** The Wisconsin Medical Society opposes transgender exclusionary health insurance policies as such policies constituting [sic] discrimination and supports legislation mandating transgender inclusive health insurance plans that provide coverage for medically appropriate care for patients with gender dysphoria. (BOD, 0121)

**MER-015 Inclusion of Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation in Health Care Documentation:** The Wisconsin Medical Society:

1. Supports the voluntary inclusion of a patient's current gender identity, sexual orientation, preferred gender pronoun(s) and preferred name in medical documentation and related forms, including electronic health records, in a culturally sensitive and voluntary manner.
2. Supports that with patient consent, gender identity be prominently displayed and easily accessible within the electronic health record.
3. Opposes the use of gender identity or sexual orientation information in medical records for the purposes of discrimination, including discrimination in the delivery of or payment for health care to transgender or gender nonconforming patients. (HOD, 0418)

**DIS-007 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Elder Health:** The Wisconsin Medical Society recommends:

1. That health care providers working with geriatric populations (e.g., aging services, residential care facilities, and home care agencies) should receive training regarding the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) seniors, including:
  - a. their concerns of being ostracized and abused by care providers and community members.
  - b. health risks, health disparities, and prevalent diseases of LGBT seniors.
  - c. how the lack of legal protections and access to social programs granted to heterosexuals causes hardship for LGBT seniors.
2. That Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) consistently and explicitly inquire whether clients desire counseling about the services that are available or pertinent for LGBT seniors and, whenever applicable, counsel clients about accessing these resources. (HOD, 0418)

**Recently Passed "Gender Affirming Care Access" from WMS Policy Cycle #1 2023**

Dear Assembly Committee on Education,

My name is Sol Kelley-Jones and I write to you today as a parent, an educator and a proud Wisconsinite who has had the privilege of knowing, working with, and loving many transgender young people in our community for the past 20 years. I am deeply concerned about Assembly Bill 377 and its attack on transgender young people simply trying to participate productively in their school communities through engaging in athletics on teams that align with their gender identity. This mean-spirited, divisive legislation targets some of our most vulnerable community members - transgender youth – and sends a dangerous message to kids across Wisconsin that our leaders are more interested in targeting already marginalized members of our school communities rather than working towards policies that nurture the health and safety of ALL of our precious young people.

At a time when we should be focusing our efforts on building a Wisconsin where all students can thrive and feel belonging - whether that is through participation in athletics or simply feeling safe to exist in their home state - this legislation with its hate-filled rhetoric would have an incredibly harmful, and even life-threatening, impact on many in our community.

I ask you to strongly oppose Assembly Bill 377 and stand strong for a Wisconsin that is affirming of the worth and dignity of all of our young people.

Thank you for your leadership,

Sol Kelley-Jones

4341 Crawford Drive  
Madison, WI  
53711

From: **Jas McDaniel** <jasmcdaniel@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 12:31 PM  
Subject: LGBTQ + bills  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

To the entire committee.

My name is Barbara Mcdaniel. My address is 201 South Chestnut St. Mineral point wi 53565

I am writing this email to let you know that i oppose the LGBTQ bill you are discussing today.

Every person, regardless of their gender and race should be entitled to equal rights in my opinion. To discriminate is of the most opposition to our common rights as human beings.

There's so many reasons beyond our scope, that friends and family that are LBGTQ that are having their rights taken away. Please stop this and find a solution where our voices are heard and a way equally to honor all.

Thank you

Barbara McDaniel

From: **Rebecca Rick** <rebecca.rick@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 12:27 PM  
Subject: Writing in support of trans youth  
To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Hello,

I'm writing to express my support for trans youth and adults in sports and all aspects of life. Trans people deserve the freedom to live in the world as their true selves. They deserve life saving medical care, which gender-affirming care absolutely is.

Using trans people as a political wedge, throwing around claims with no merit and shaky evidence at best, is putting so many people -- trans and cis alike -- in real danger. It's absolutely despicable.

I urge legislators to vote no on bans that prevent trans youth and adults from living their lives safely, happily, and unbothered by bigots with divisive political agendas.

Sincerely,  
Rebecca Rick  
53207

From: **Catherine Capellaro** <catcapellaro@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 12:16 PM  
Subject: Testimony  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Dear legislators:

I am a proud, lifelong Wisconsinite who is disturbed and sickened by the anti-trans legislation being proposed. Trans kids and their are already living in fear and navigating dangerous situations every single day.

Don't give in to the hateful, wrongheaded narrative about trans people.

Don't deny kids the right to participate in sports or receive health care because of their sexual identity. It's none of our business.

Vote against AB 378, AB377, and AB465.

Thank you,  
Catherine Capellaro  
608-669-6126  
[catcapellaro@gmail.com](mailto:catcapellaro@gmail.com)

*Dear Committee Members,*

*I write this email in strong opposition to the Trans Athlete Ban and Trans Medical Care Ban. As a middle school teacher in Wisconsin, I have had the opportunity to get to know many wonderful trans children. Looking at these bills and the context around them, there is no conclusion for me to draw other than these bills are intended entirely to use the law to expose trans children to even more cruelty than they've already experienced. There are real problems in our state that you have the power to solve, such as the poverty wages many of the families of my students are earning in their full-time second and even third jobs. Or our environment being devastated by corporations. People suffering pain that can be relieved with cannabis products are forced to turn to crime.*

*Yet this is what you spend your time on? It's really unbelievable. The existence of trans people may make bigots uncomfortable, but their discomfort with the identities of others is not a government interest. Please do something useful, for God's sake.*

*Sincerely,*

*Brian Harris  
4613 Goldfinch Dr.  
Madison, WI 53714*

How cruel this bill would be. We should be trying to think of legislation that makes Trans youth feel more included. I often found childhood to be frightening, and I cannot imagine the pain this bill would cause.



To whom it may concern,

My name is Elle Hutto, a concerned citizen of Janesville, WI, residing at 2414 Black Bridge Rd. I am writing to express my strong opposition to AB 377, the K-12 Athlete Ban bill. As a trans nonbinary individual, I firmly believe in equality and inclusivity for all, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

The language used to discuss trans kids in relation to this bill is deeply disturbing and harmful. It perpetuates false information and amounts to nothing but hate speech. Trans kids are not a threat; they are children who deserve to be treated with dignity, respect, and love.

It is disheartening to see the world we live in becoming more hostile towards transgender and LGBTQIA+ individuals. Instead of nurturing and supporting them, society is attempting to erase their existence. This is not the path we should be taking.

Claims that trans kids pose a danger in sports are baseless. Sports can be challenging and even dangerous, regardless of a participant's gender identity. Trans girls do not pose a threat to cisgender girls, just as trans boys do not endanger cisgender boys. We should be fostering an environment that encourages inclusivity and teamwork, rather than perpetuating discrimination and exclusion.

I urge you to reconsider the passage of AB 377 and instead focus on creating policies that promote equality, understanding, and acceptance for all individuals. Let us work together to build a future where every child, regardless of their gender identity, can thrive and live authentically.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Elle Hutto

Dear Representatives Green, Quinn and Kitchens:

I am a resident of the Town of Clover, Bayfield County. I have 2 children enrolled in Bayfield Public Schools. I am writing as a parent and as a medical professional, in opposition to AB 377 and AB 465.

I work with many families of all political persuasion. I am aware that there are people who believe that transgender identity is a choice. 56% of transgender youth have considered suicide. Regardless of whether or not we understand or support these kids, if we are to consider ourselves pro-life, we absolutely must value their lives by considering the impact of legislation such as this on them.

I am the mother to a trans daughter in the 10th grade. She does not play sports at school, but she does fill our freezer with venison every fall and she is my most favorite fishing buddy. She plans to attend medical school after college, and has proclaimed clearly that "it will not be in Wisconsin" if our State doesn't want me here. She is literally planning to leave the state (and bring her brilliant mind with her) because the people that are supposed to represent our family in our State Government are making it exceedingly clear that she is not welcome to live her true, beautiful self here. This is our State's loss in many ways. I hope you consider this impact when supporting these bills.

We are life long residents of the State of Wisconsin. We began my daughter's medical care in the state of Minnesota because we knew this was coming. We travel every 2-3 months. We spend hundreds of dollars in the State of Minnesota during these trips. This is money that would otherwise be supporting Wisconsin's local businesses/economy.

As a WI licensed midwife, I also need to bring forward the concept of informed consent and shared decision making. It would never be appropriate for me to take my personal belief system or agenda and insert it into another family's health care options. Nor is it appropriate for a legislative body to insert their political ideology or opinion in my family's health care choices. This is up to my husband, myself, my daughter and her health care team (of licensed professionals). It simply is not up to any government body to legislate what care is available to my children. I can't quite get over the irony of a Republican led bill that inserts government control into family life.

Please consider the irreparable damage that these bills will cause for our children, our economy and our great State's dignity.

Sincerely,

Dana Churness

Anne Kroeger  
Madison, WI 53704

Excluding transgender students from athletics is a false solution in search of a nonexistent problem. Cispeople come in all shapes and sizes within their identified gender, defining exclusions for trans athletes alone is discriminatory. I do not support this bill.

Dear Assembly Members on the Committee on Education

I am writing in opposition to Assembly Bill 377.

This is already a vulnerable group of children. Gender dysphoria is real, transgender students deserve the same opportunities and benefits that K-12 sports provide to other students, and there is no evidence to suggest that transgender athletes have or will disproportionately dominate their chosen sports in the gender with which they identify.

Please don't vote this out of committee. It would send a horrible message to transgender kids throughout our beautiful State. They're not hurting anyone. Let's not hurt them.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Alex Habriga  
Fitchburg, WI 53575

To all of the members of the committee,

I oppose the AB 377 k-12 athlete ban. I am an educator with the Madison Metropolitan School District, a mother of a 5th grader and an advocate for trans youth and people around the country who are constantly under attack.

Our trans youth belong in sports, as they do in every aspect of daily human life. Please continue to make Wisconsin a great place to live for all people. Please oppose this bill. Trans people belong on our courts and on our fields; they belong to have sports embedded in their lives, to increase their self esteem, play on a team and have all the goodness that sports can bring to our lives.

Sincerely,  
Gina Nolan  
Cottage Grove WI 53527

My name is Sharon Cook. I am a resident of District Three, a mother, and an active voter. I am writing to ask you to please oppose Assembly Bill AB 377.

I am deeply concerned by the intense focus on defining and controlling sex and gender in the public sphere. It is astonishing that the House of Representatives has determined that the best use of their time is to define the word 'sex' and police how athletics are carried out in our schools.

This bill is hurtful. As a pastor, I had the great blessing to work with children and youth. In 10 years of working in congregations, and 8 years of overseeing summer camps, I was fortunate enough to care for youth who are transgender. I met parents who cared fiercely for their kids, advocating for them to be safe and included. I met staff who would extend their creativity to find solutions for all kids to be safe and included. I met students who opened their hearts to make sure that other youth would feel safe and included. This bill, on the other hand, excludes students from participating. It causes trauma by targeting an already vulnerable population. It tells people that they are not valued, and in fact they are despised for who they are and for simply existing.

In 2005, I worked with a national youth ministry organization to find a creative way to allow one of my students to attend our summer mission trip. My student was assigned female at birth, but now presented as male. He had a male name, pronouns, and appearance. Was the solution perfect? No. Did it require extra work from me, my staff, and my student's family? Yes. But we found a way for everyone to participate.

The next year, the same organization told me they were changing their policies. This student would no longer be welcome. Nothing had changed other than a written policy.

Do you know how painful it is to tell a 16 year old that they were not allowed to give up a week of their summer to volunteer to repair homes for people living in poverty? That his spirit of generosity was somehow less than the other students? Can you imagine being accepted fully, as you are one year, only to have that ripped away from you the following year?

I couldn't do it. I wouldn't do it. I called and worked and arranged matters until the organization relented. Until we found a way for my student to participate.

I urge you to resist the easy answers. To engage more fully in the complexities of sex and gender and gender identity. To give as much control as possible to the people who are in the middle of the conversation – parents, students, athletes, athletic associations, schools.

Please oppose Assembly Bill AB 377.

Sharon Cook

Dear members of the Committee on Education,

I am writing today to voice my **strong opposition to bill AB377**. Being a kid is difficult enough, being a LGBTQ+ kid is even harder especially when your existence is considered a problem. Please let these young athletes enjoy the sports they love and the activities that make them happy in the body that makes them happy. Sports should be a place for inclusion not for targeting a marginalized population.

Thank you,

Lauren Cohen  
Verona, WI

Dear Wisconsin State Legislature, specifically the committee holding hearings about AB 377:

My name is Katrina Gonzales and I live in Wauwatosa, WI 53226. I am **opposed to** the bill AB 377 because trans people have the same rights as every other person. Do not pass this bill.



Rachel Rovinsky  
Regarding Wisconsin Legislature  
October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023

I am writing to oppose Assembly Bill 377 (K-12 trans athlete ban).

I am a trans athlete and biology graduate student at UW-Madison, and a Wisconsin resident, voter, and taxpayer. I want trans kids to be able to enjoy sport without having to themselves into situations that make them uncomfortable and unsafe. Based on actions that other states have taken to take away trans people's rights, we know that this bill only serves as a stepping stone for banning trans healthcare altogether, which is in direct opposition to scientific literature and the most recent WPATH standards of care.

This bill is not based on science and sense, but fear and prejudice. Numerous peer reviewed studies have shown the life-saving effects of trans healthcare, and the minimal to non-existent advantages of trans athletes in competition with their cis peers. All these bills will do is isolate and vilify a vulnerable community.

Thank you for reading my testimony, and I hope you consider opposing Assembly Bill 377.

Sincerely,  
Rachel Rovinsky

Dear members of the Assembly Committees on Education, Colleges & Universities, and Mental Health, Substance Abuse Prevention, Children & Families,

My name is Nick Eliot, and I am a long time resident of Ashland County writing to you today, asking you to vote NO on Assembly and Senate Bills 378 & 377.

Having coached athletes from age 6 to 25, including a women's category team, I understand the importance of teamwork in our social development. Students with truly equal access to a sport grow up to become more well-rounded adults prepared to take up challenges head on with confidence, and understanding that hard work pays off. These bills do not give students equal access to activities, where they can participate with their peers. Female transgender athletes should not be singled out and discriminated against, simply for asking to participate in our society alongside their peers.

If passed, this bill will harm all athletes in Wisconsin by discriminating against a few. I urge you to vote NO.

Thank you,  
Nick Eliot

Hello,

My name is Mia Scott. I am a Senior at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. I have a 3.6 GPA and have made the Dean's List. I strongly oppose all three bills being debated today. I myself am not transgender, but am well-versed on the topic and love my transgender friends and neighbors in the community. Transgender students and athletes deserve every right their classmates are given. I urge the committee to listen to the voices of actual students - I know the majority of us believe that transgender athletes getting to play on their school teams is much fairer than the alternative.

Thank you,  
Mia Scott  
she/her/hers  
Stevens Point, WI



October 4, 2023

**Testimony of Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice re: Ban on Trans Youth Participation in Sports**

**Re:** AB 377 (k-12); AB 378 (Colleges); SB 377 (Colleges); SB 378 (k-12)

**To:** Assembly Committee on Education; Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities; Senate Committee on Mental Health, Substance Abuse Prevention, Children and Families

**Contact:** Rabbi Bonnie Margulis, Executive Director, Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice, [wifaithvoices4justice@gmail.com](mailto:wifaithvoices4justice@gmail.com); 608-513-7121

I am Rabbi Bonnie Margulis, Executive Director of Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice. We are a statewide, non-partisan, interfaith organization dedicated to promoting social justice in Wisconsin. I am here today to speak out against any and all legislation that harms members of the LGBTQ+ community, especially young people in that community. And make no mistake, legislation that seeks to bar students from team sport does grave harm.

When we ban trans kids from participating in school sports, we deny them the opportunity afforded to other kids to learn leadership skills, the value of teamwork, and the discipline of hard work and cooperation toward a common goal. But even more importantly, we send them and the rest of the community the message that trans kids are not worthy of the same rights and opportunities as other kids. We send the message that members of the trans community are somehow 'less than', Other, less worthy of being treated with the same dignity and respect as everyone else.

The stigma created by these messages is the reason depression, anxiety, and suicidality are at a crisis level in the LGBTQ+ community. According to the Trevor Project's 2020 National Youth Survey on LGBTQ mental health, 40% of LGBTQ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the previous 12 months, with more than half of trans and nonbinary youth having considered it.

The members of Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice come from many different faith traditions. We are Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Baha'i, Wiccan, Hindu, Quaker, Unitarian, and others. We have different beliefs and practices. But all our faiths teach the same basic value that honors the worth and dignity of every human being and the imperative above all else to love others as we love ourselves and to do no harm. We call upon our legislature to refrain from doing harm to the trans community and to vote against these bills.

Rabbi Bonnie Margulis  
Madison, WI 53719

To the Committee Members,

Members of both Assembly and Senate of the State of Wisconsin considering these proposals, I submit the following for addition to your materials for your basis of determination in the matters of AB 377, AB 465, SB 480, SB 479.

I am offering my opinion in opposition to the above proposed bills as an instructor for training law enforcement in working with the transgender community for over fifteen years. What started as an investigation into what is transgender, turn into research as I saw the need for our criminal justice entities, both law enforcement and corrections and the court system, to legitimize and understand who transgender individuals are.

What I found is eerily similar treatment to other socially misunderstood human conditions which struck fear in and caused social condemnation and punishment for being a naturally occurring human phenomenon. A great example of this is the treatment of left-handed persons not so long ago as "the devil's spawn," where we had to fear them, correct them, punish them, treat them medically. See:

**The Prevention And Correction of Left-Handedness In Children** by J.W. Conway published in 1935 and we believe also had the subtitle "On Curing the Disability and Disease of Left-Handedness".

**The Mental Sorrows of Left-Handedness (1924)** by Dr. William. S. Inman.

We now know it is a genetic factor(s) that cause left handedness. There is evidence that being transgender is also a rare but natural genetic occurrence like having red hair.

The American Psychological Association's position on the type of legislation being proposed is "

*While supporters of these bills typically claim to want to protect children, scientific evidence ultimately suggests that the*

*models of care these bills might allow cause harm to transgender children, and those who may be gender creative as children who ultimately decide they are not transgender (Ashley, 2021). [ 10/01/2023 @ <https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbtq/gender-affirmative-care> ]*

Other government medical, science resources that I have accumulated research documents that show important relevant information to be considered in your deliberations are from the National Institute of Health (NIH), The National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI), Mayo Clinic at Rochester MN- Transgender and Intersex Specialty Care Clinic (TISCC), and University of MN - The Eli Coleman Institute for Sexual and Gender Health (ISGH), along with many other highly regarded sources from around the world. Please consider speaking with Dr. Scott Leibowitz, MD, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and Medical Director of Behavioral Health, THRIVE Program (Differences of Sexual Development and Gender Concerns), Nationwide Children's Hospital, Columbus, Ohio. Please see his publicly available talk for physicians: <https://videocast.nih.gov/PastEvents.asp?c=27>

*"psychobiologist Antonio Guillamon of the National Distance Education University in Madrid and neuropsychologist Carme Junqué Plaja of the University of Barcelona—used MRI to examine the brains of 24 female-to-males and 18 male-to-females—both before and after treatment with cross-sex hormones. Their results, published in 2013, showed that even before treatment the brain structures of the trans people were more similar in some respects to the brains of their experienced gender than those of their natal gender. [<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/is-there-something-unique-about-the-transgender-brain/> ]*

*"It's not genitalia that determines gender, says clinical psychiatrist [Murat Altinay, MD](#), Head of LGBT Mental Health Services at Cleveland Clinic. A closer look at brain structure and function reveals that transgender people have striking similarities to their identified gender rather than their*

*biological gender — even before hormone therapy.*" [ <https://consultqd.clevelandclinic.org/the-brain-and-gender-identity-current-evidence-and-implications-for-practice-podcast/> ]

I have found that discussing the vast variety of genetic variations possible, and human conditions that medicine and science know about and that societal embarrassment and fears and social shaming, stop any knowledge to the general public. Do any of the committee members know what being Intersex is? [ <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/16324-intersex> ] Or what Guevedoces is? [ <https://www.livescience.com/52247-guevedoces-girls-boys.html> ] What is not general public knowledge about the variety of forms of human in existence was shocking when reading the 100's of medical journals and scientific publications.

May I suggest two other recent publications for resources for your consideration:

NOT A CHOICE What you weren't taught about the Biology of Sex and Gender; by P J Paulson,  
Hansel Pub Ltd., ISBN-13: 978-0976323518

The second is on a related and arguably just as important human issue of Intersex persons:

INVERSE COWGIRL a memoir; by Alicia Roth Weigel,  
HarperCollins Publishers, ISBN 978-0-06-329528-5

Finally, I ask that the Committee Members do not allow false social contagion fears about trans persons to dictate your decisions on the proposed bills. Do research, ask the medical and scientific experts who work with children and adults and who are not prejudiced against new and known knowledge.

Find out what history and other cultures know about persons who feel they are born into the wrong form. I believe from my research review that in the womb, an XY brain and neurological start can be given the wrong hormones because of imperfect DNA genes

and proteins when it comes to genital development after week 7 (9) of pregnancy and then develop externally different from the neurological baseline. The same for an XX beginning to be inversely externally developed.

Please don't be part of the "I didn't know" excuse.

Thank you for reading and consideration of this information and accept my offer to discuss it additionally with you.

Respectfully submitted by

James W. Parlow

2709 Oak Drive, La Crosse, WI 54601

[jparlow@winona.edu](mailto:jparlow@winona.edu) (Retired Emeritus Professor Sociology-Criminal Justice)



Hello Education Assembly Committee,

My name is Julia Olson and I live on 4316 Bordeaux Ct, Janesville, WI 53546.

I am contacting you today to urge you to say no to the transgender sports ban AB 377.

I have loved ones who are transgender, and I have seen the impact gender discrimination such as not being able to play on the sports team that matches your gender has on transgender people's self-esteem.

Having transgender girls playing in girls' sports **does not negatively impact cisgender girls**. In states in which transgender girls are allowed, there is not a decline in cisgender girls' athletic enrollment (<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/fact-sheet-importance-sports-participation-transgender-youth/>).

Further, not allowing transgender children to play on sports teams of their gender identity **demonstrates a belief that their identity is not valid**. This has tragic impacts on transgender youth. One study found that **28 percent of transgender youth whose pronouns are not affirmed attempted suicide in the past year** (<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/fact-sheet-importance-sports-participation-transgender-youth/>). Others consistently find that transgender youth face numerous challenges, including bullying and discrimination. The risk of suicidality among transgender youth is staggering; 40 percent of transgender youth have attempted suicide (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32345113/>).

We cannot stand idly by while these young people suffer due to a lack of understanding and compassion.

We have a responsibility to protect our transgender by allowing them to play on sports teams that match their gender identity.

Save transgender youth lives. Say NO to AB 377.

Thank you,

Julia

Transgender individuals come into this world the way that God made them, and deserve the same rights and protections as the rest of us. Sadly, transgenders are often the target of hate crimes, due to the fact that so many individuals misunderstand their situations; and the rate of suicide among transgender teens is tragically high, often due to a lack of support from their families, their peers and the community at large. The proposed transgender sports ban is a misguided effort to deny transgenders their rights, and is based on a gross misunderstanding of transgenders. In the 48 years I've been a Wisconsin voter, I've been proud of its honest and fair treatment of its citizens – ALL its citizens. Please, continue that tradition by defeating the transgender sports ban, and standing against the bigotry inherent in the bill.

Respectfully Yours,

Denise Beckfield  
547 Basswood Ave.  
Verona, WI 53593

Regarding AB377

My input regarding AB377 pertains to the wording in the bill's text on lines 14 and 15 "sex" means the sex determined by a physician at birth and reflected on the birth certificate." This wording is discriminatory because it excludes participants that have transitioned or are transitioning from male to female or from female to male.

As the parent of a young teenager who is an athlete and is in the process of transitioning from male to female, I find AB377 to be an immediate concern. My daughter participates in 3 seasons of school sports--volleyball, basketball, and softball. In all cases, she is on the team that matches her gender identity. She gains great confidence and self-esteem from being included in our small school sports teams. She is definitely not the best athlete on the team, but she's a part of the school spirit and camaraderie that comes from being part of the team.

Our small school district would not be able to support having multiple teams divided by gender. There are just not enough kids in our school to support this. What will this mean for a kid like my daughter? Exclusion is what it means. Being told that even though you are one of the most "girlie" girls in your grade (by appearance and actions), you don't belong on the girls volleyball team.

Why would our state government support this kind of discrimination? Let's be inclusive and show support for all kids. There are a lot of different types of kids on every team--as I watch our school's football or basketball team, whether it's middle school or high school level--I see all types of bodies and maturity levels even on the same team. Some of those kids are over 6 feet tall and some are under 5 feet tall. Some are extremely muscular and some are not. It doesn't matter what their gender expression is. These differences exist in all situations. Let's support all of them and let them play.

Sincerely,  
Anna Knapp  
Ellison Bay, WI 54210

To the Committee on Education

I will start first and foremost by saying please vote NO on AB 377, the Transgender Athlete Ban. Do not pass this or any other legislation aimed at attacking the transgender community. This harmful legislation should never be even considered. Transgender and non-binary youth are people, just like you. They are just kids who want to be able to play sports with their friends and have access to all the same resources in the world that their cisgender peers do.

They just want to be included. I can only imagine how tough it must feel when you're a kid and a state legislature wants to force you to the sideline just because of who you are. AB 377 is nothing more than vile discrimination. This is a false issue that is being used as a distraction from the actual problems facing Wisconsinites. I implore you to stop all of these attacks on our kids and see them as the beautiful rays of sunshine that they are. The lives and lived experiences of these kids and their families are real lives that these hateful bills are upending. The government has no business interfering in kids' lives and privacy.

The following information from the Human Rights Campaign accurately details why denying access to sports for transgender youth is unnecessary and only harms everyone:

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/myths-and-facts-battling-disinformation-about-transgender-rights>

"Thousands of transgender and non-binary students have been playing sports for years without any unfair advantages or problems. Legislation designed to exclude transgender people, particularly women and girls, from participating in athletics has been rejected by educators, athletes, NCAA-trained facilitators, coaches, advocates for women and girls, and medical professionals. In fact, the Associated Press asked lawmakers who were seeking to pass these discriminatory bills to cite problem cases in their states and [not a single lawmaker could identify a case.](#)

That's why [more than 500 college athletes](#) signed a letter to the NCAA board of governors asking the organization to refuse to schedule championships in states that have banned transgender participation in sports.' But it's also clear that equity in sports benefits transgender and non-transgender athletes alike. [Sixteen states have had fully transgender-inclusive policies on the books, some for over a decade.](#) In those states, girls sports has seen an **increase** in participation by cisgender girls (girls who aren't transgender). In other words, things have **gotten better for girls' sports**. Meanwhile, states with anti-transgender policies have seen things get **worse** for girls sports."

Furthermore, According to new polling, [released this month by The 19th and SurveyMonkey](#), 7 in 10 Americans think that politicians are not informed enough about transgender people to create fair policies. Americans would prefer that politicians either protect transgender people or not focus on transgender issues at all.

In closing, I ask once again that you vote No on AB 377 and also vote No on the Gender affirming care bans AB 465 and SB 480. Please stop these vile, hateful attacks on our trans kids. Stop trying to denigrate their humanity. Please stop using LGBTQ+ adults and kids as a scapegoat. None of these anti-trans bills should ever become law. Wisconsin is a place where inclusion, understanding, empathy and most importantly love should flourish. Vote NO on all of these hateful attacks.

Let Trans kids play. And let them have access to essential health care.

Chris Heizer

Eau Claire, WI 54703

To the members of the Committee on Education:

As a teacher (speaking for myself, not as a representative of my university), I strongly oppose any ban on trans and nonbinary athletes playing sports on the team of their choice. Trans and nonbinary young people have rights to privacy and bodily autonomy and should be able to benefit from sports programs just as cisgender young people do. No one is harmed by allowing trans athletes to play sports as themselves. To suggest otherwise is performative cruelty. Do the right and humane thing and do not pass this ban (AB 377).

Thank you for your time,

Kate Beutner  
8020 Hillcrest Dr, Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Madison, WI 53716  
[hello@openmadison.org](mailto:hello@openmadison.org)

October 2, 2023

Dear Wisconsin State Representatives and Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my opposition to AB377, aimed at limiting the participation of transgender youth in sports. As an advocate for equality and inclusivity, I firmly believe that every individual should have the opportunity to participate in sports without discrimination.

While I understand that the intent behind this legislation may be to ensure fairness in athletic competition, it is essential to consider its potential consequences for transgender athletes. These young individuals have the same passion, dedication, and talent as their cisgender peers and should not face barriers to participating in the sports they love.

It's important to recognize that transgender athletes face unique challenges in their athletic journeys. Transitioning can already be a complex and challenging process, and imposing additional restrictions on their participation in sports only exacerbates these challenges. Instead of fostering inclusivity and support, such legislation can perpetuate discrimination and isolation.

Moreover, I believe that sports should be a space where individuals can come together, regardless of their gender identity, to learn valuable life skills such as teamwork, discipline, and resilience. Excluding transgender athletes sends a harmful message of exclusion and reinforces stereotypes, contrary to the principles of equality and unity that sports should embody.

I urge you to reconsider this proposed legislation and seek alternative ways to address concerns about fairness in sports.

Sincerely,

Heidi Duss [she/they]  
Founder, OPEN Foundation Board President, OPEN

I am sharing written testimony, as a Christian faith leader in Wisconsin, to oppose Assembly Bills AB 378, AB 377, and AB 465. This Wednesday, October 4, the day of the hearings for these bills, is the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi. Francis is a well-known and widely-beloved saint. He proclaimed respect and care for every human being, saying, "Your God is of your flesh; God lives in your nearest neighbor, in every person." And he is a strong voice within Christian tradition for honoring God through love of Creation; he believed that nature was a mirror of God, and named all living beings as family.

Often, in the public square, people who are opposed to rights and protections for transgender people will talk about Nature as part of making their case. The underlying argument is that somebody's DNA or body parts should determine how they present themselves and live in the world - and that anything else is against God's intentions, as the Creator and Author of nature.

The thing is, that's a very limited view of Nature. When we approach God's creation with loving attention and respect - as Francis did - we find that it's often more complex, messy, and interesting than these deterministic binaries.

This past summer my church gathered our middle school youth for a week of Creation Care Camp. One of our most memorable outings was to Heartland Farm Sanctuary, in Stoughton. During our tour, the kids were amazed to meet Cream Puff the goose. Cream Puff is a domestic goose who was rescued as a stray living in a drainage pond. At rescue, Cream Puff was determined to be a female goose. But as they settled into their new environment at Heartland, Cream Puff started to show some of the distinctive behaviors of a gander - a male goose. It turns out it's not unusual for some kinds of birds to spontaneously change their gender behavior - and even biology!

Is it appropriate to apply the human concept of "transgender" to Cream Puff the goose? Probably not. But is it appropriate to look to Nature or the science of biology to justify rigid identities and categories of sex and gender? Not really! We are, all of us, more than our genes and our body parts, just as we're also more than what our culture or history tell us to be. But science CAN tell us that Nature is not on the side of simple, limited, or unchanging ideas about sex and gender.

I and my congregation join Saint Francis in seeing Creation as a mirror of God, and taking seriously our kinship with all living things. Our commitment to being an inclusive parish (and to the growth and learning that involves!) IS celebrating Nature, God's Creation in all its holy diversity, ambiguity, and mystery.

The Rev. Miranda Hassett  
St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church, Madison, WI

To the Assembly Committee on Education:

My name is Lan McCauley and I live in Milwaukee's 53211 zip code. I am a lifelong Wisconsin resident and a cross country and track coach at Milwaukee Public Schools.

One of my athletes this year joined cross country as a senior. He is juggling the sport with student government, but he still plans to achieve his personal record before the season ends this month. He is an important training and racing partner for one of our junior varsity boys, and has injected extra humor and focus into the team.

This athlete is also transgender, and he deserves to be here.

In my past three years coaching at Milwaukee King International High School, I've had the privilege to meet and mentor over 100 student-athletes in the King Distance Running program that many consider to be a family.

King Distance is a proud family of defending City Conference Champions for over a decade. We are a diverse family of wonderful young people from all walks of life, racial and cultural backgrounds, genders and sexualities.

All of my student-athletes just want to work and play hard with the team, but some face barriers to participating equally.

One team captain who wears a hijab was repeatedly harassed by an official even though the rules explicitly allow religious headgear. Economically disadvantaged runners need extra support to get the clothing, rides, nutrition, and everything required. Nonbinary student-athletes must race in a binary gendered category that doesn't represent them.

These student-athletes are not only leaders on the course, but an inspiration to their teammates. They inspire me, but they shouldn't have to.

Every student deserves to be part of the King Distance Running family. K-12 sports should be inclusive and Assembly Bill 377 attempts to make that impossible. A lot would be lost. If this bill became law, my conscience would not allow me to continue coaching in Wisconsin.

I ask that the Assembly let my runners run and protect all of our teams by rejecting AB-377.



Priscilla Rose Bort  
2233 N Summit Ave Apt 713  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

**TO: Committee on Education**  
**SUBJ: Opposing AB377**

I am submitting written testimony against AB377 - An Act to amend 118.13 (1); and to create 118.132 of the statutes; Relating to: designating athletic sports and teams operated or sponsored by public schools or private schools participating in a parental choice program based on the sex of the participants.

Transgender students, really all students, look to sports for many reasons - to find friends, to have an outlet for their energy, to do something for fun - the list goes on and on. We are practicing full-on discrimination by seeking to ban transgender students from participating in the same activities as their cisgender peers. All students are looking to belong - transgender students and cisgender students alike. Let all students play, and let them play sports with other students of their own identified gender. Studies already show that transgender students have a higher risk of death by suicide - by excluding them from everyday activities like this, that number will just go up. Spend the time that is being spent to ban these students on helping them instead - work to fund their schools, guidance counselors, psychologists, librarians, and art teachers instead. Wisconsin does not need a K-12 Athlete Ban or College Athlete Ban.

Dear members of the Assembly Committee on AB377,

My name is Kennedy Crouch, and I am a resident of Fitchburg. I've lived in Wisconsin for three years and I'm a biological scientist working with ThermoFisher Scientific.

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Assembly Bill #AB377. As a Wisconsinite, I am opposed to this bill because I am opposed to the unscientific and irrational discrimination against people based on their gender identity. Furthermore, the idea of mandatory genital inspection for participation in sporting events, especially on children, (which is fundamentally what this bill would represent) abhorrent.

If passed, this bill will cost lives. At a time when LGBTQ+ youth are already struggling with harassment and discrimination, we should be making it clear that they are safe and welcome in Wisconsin.

I don't believe politicians should interfere with personal, private medical decisions that should only be made between patients, their doctors, and their families.

Sincerely,

Kennedy Crouch

Fitchburg, WI

What is your concern?

1. Are you worried that a man may pretend to be a woman so that he can win women's sports? No man trying to boost his ego or feel better about himself is going to think that will happen by winning in women's sport.

2. Are you afraid of cisgender men masquerading as women to win women's sports? Because, spoiler, you're afraid of cisgender men, not trans women.

3. Are you afraid of an unfair advantage? Biological diversity exists everywhere in humans, in every demographic (including cisgender men and cisgender women). When these biological diversity occur in cis men, we almost always celebrate this (Michael Phelps with his height and huge wingspan, basketball players with 12" handspan, football players that can accelerate extremely fast). It's always met with adoration and celebration. But this isn't the case for cis women. If women are "too strong" or "too masculine" and do not conform to the western standards of what women should look like, then there is a bias against them (Simone Biles, Caster Semenya, Serena Williams).

4. Are you "protecting" girls in sports? If you want to exclude trans girls from girls sports, you have to know who is a trans girl and who is not. How do you propose you undertake this? Body examinations??? At what point is a girl too tall and will be accused of being trans? When is a girl not feminine enough in appearance and will be accused of being trans? Where is the line if a girl is too strong? Her hands too big? When is a girl too good at sports and will be accused of being trans gender? You are legally enforcing what a girls body is allowed to look like and perform.

You are fear mongering by supporting these attacks on trans people.

If you want to protect women, start by protecting all women, including trans women.

Trans people are real people. Trans women are real people. Trans kids are real people. These are real people with real feelings, and the amount of hatred thrown at them is appalling.

Heather Biesik  
Appleton, WI

Dear Committee on Education,

My name is Allison Lindsay, I live at 1111 E Johnson St, Madison, WI 53703. I'm writing in regards to the anti-LGBTQ+ bill currently being discussed. I want to make clear that I DO NOT support these bills in any way, and find them inhumane. I AM in FULL SUPPORT of ALL humans having the right to privacy, bodily autonomy, the right to play organized sports with the gender they identify with, and the freedom to access healthcare. Most importantly, I absolutely believe this IS a MUST for trans and non-binary youth.

PLEASE DO NOT ALLOW BANS TO HAPPEN!!!!

Sincerely,  
Allie Lindsay

Hello,

I would like to state my formal opposition to the following bills:

Assembly Bill 378 (College trans athlete ban)

Assembly Bill 377 (K-12 trans athlete ban)

Assembly Bill 465 (Trans youth healthcare ban)

These bills are not based on science and sense, but fear and prejudice. Numerous peer reviewed studies have shown the life-saving

effects of trans healthcare, and the minimal to non-existent advantages of trans athletes in competition with their cis peers. All these bills will do is isolate and vilify a vulnerable community.

I beg you, please voice your strong opposition to these bills.

Sincerely,

Your Constituent,

Allondra Woods

My name is Kora,

I'm one of the handful of organizers for Oshkosh Pride 2023 and for 2024. AB 377 and 378 are discriminatory bills that are damaging and harmful and full of hate toward trans youth, targeting Trans women, and young adults that simply want to live their authentic selves and enjoy the sports they play.

Restricting Trans individuals from being their authentic selves and living their truth will only further damage and bring harm to their lives, including risk ending them. Trans individuals are far less likely to commit suicide when they are able to live in an environment that affirms who they are and supports them.

AB 465 is a gross invasion of privacy between a Trans youth and their doctor as well as a discriminatory restriction of access to healthcare. Healthcare is a human right. Trans affirming healthcare is healthcare. I, myself, am living proof that Trans affirming healthcare saves lives. I am happier and healthier thanks to the Trans affirming care I receive in Wisconsin.

DO NOT follow blindly the trend that your party is setting in other states. Stop being cowards, and fight for the lives that you represent in this state. Supporters of this bill will end up on the wrong side of history as Trans youth deserve to live their lives freely as their true selves, supported and unrestricted.

Be on the side of actual freedom and love and support, so that Trans youth may thrive in this state and bring about progress around us.

I hope these words reach you and that your hearts and minds open up to supporting progress.

Thank you,  
Ms Kora Novy

As a physician, I rely on high quality evidence and scientific rigor to help me understand how to best support my patients' health. One bill proposed in the Wisconsin Senate will actively restrict my patients' ability to receive gender affirming care (**Assembly Bill 465**), in direct opposition to guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Psychiatric Association. Without the ability to receive appropriate gender affirming medical care, more patients will experience severe dysphoria, and be at risk of loss of life. In addition, **Assembly Bills 377 and 378** will ostracize an already marginalized community of young people, leading to worse mental health and safety.

Please oppose:

1. **Assembly Bill 378** College Athlete Ban
2. **Assembly Bill 377** K-12 Athlete Ban
3. **Assembly Bill 465** Medical Care Ban

Re: Assembly Bill 465: Criminalizing physicians for providing best medical care is reprehensible. To pass this bill would actively harm the ability of people in your district to obtain appropriate medical care and integration into their communities, putting lives and health at risk.

Re: Assembly Bills 377 and 378: These bills would effectively "other" children and young adults who already struggle to find safe spaces in their communities. I cannot overemphasize the harm this will create for the mental health of this population, who already struggles with higher rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide than cisgender youth.

It has been exhausting over many years to see so many legislators in Wisconsin disregard all evidence-based medicine and expert opinion regarding multiple health related topics to pass bills that hinder my ability to care for my patients. My patients and I are relying on you to stand up for best practice medical care. It will save children's lives.

Dr. Siobhan Wilson, MD, PhD  
Middleton, WI 53562

To the Members of the AB 378 and AB 377 Committees:

- This is one of the most extreme political attacks on transgender people in recent memory. Not only does it display a fundamental lack of understanding of transgender children it appears to criminalize best-practice medical care for transgender children which is backed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association, and other leading medical authorities.
- Medical decisions are best left to the patients, their families, and their healthcare providers in accordance with medical best practices. Politicians shouldn't interfere in these decisions.
- Best practice medical care for transgender youth simply delays puberty until young people are old enough to make their own decisions about their lived gender. This bill aims to take away their choices and tries to prevent them from having the chance to live as the gender they know they are inside.
- Being a kid is hard enough. We don't need politicians making it even harder for kids who are transgender, denying them best-practice medical care, and singling them out for increased bullying and harassment.
- Research shows that transgender youth whose families support their gender identity have a 52% decrease in suicidal thoughts, a 48% decrease in suicide attempts, and a significant increase in self-esteem and general health.
- According to the Trevor Project's 2020 National Youth Survey on LGBTQ+ mental health, 40% of LGBTQ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the past 12 months, with more than half of trans and nonbinary youth having considered it. This is a crisis that will only be exacerbated by efforts to take away healthcare options for young people.
- Putting these restrictions in state statute would have a chilling effect and prevent our state from recruiting and retaining medical professionals, who would most certainly hesitate to live and work in such a hostile environment.

Erin Fischer  
DeForest, WI 53532



To WI State Legislators:

Your plan to ban Trans K-12 students athletes from competing in our state of Wisconsin (AB 377) is wrong-minded, cruel, and harmful to constituents.

Because you are making this state unsafe for vulnerable citizens, I will not speak directly nor specifically about the MANY Trans people I know. I can say that you are causing additional pain, suffering and fear for people already suffering: This is in direct opposition to caring for your state constituents.

This is not a decision for State government.

And especially not by a political party intent on misrepresenting facts about Trans children, their bodies and their capabilities. Trans boys are boys and should be competing as such. Trans girls are girls and should be competing as such.

ALL schoolchildren in our state should have the opportunity to participate in sports that interest them, for the joy and growth that occurs during team participation.

Your plan to contain and remove Trans children from sports in Wisconsin is gross overreach and shows how the Republican Party in Wisconsin has embraced Hard Right political views that impinge on citizens' right to live freely and with liberty. You are acting in service to your own quest for power and not in the best interest of your constituents.

I do NOT support AB377.

Monica Walk  
165 15<sup>th</sup> St  
Fond du Lac, WI 54935

Dear Committee on Education,

My spouse, Jane, and I will celebrate 36 years together next week - we are proudly members of the whole LGBT community and as your constituents we urge you to 100% oppose AB 377.

This bill is offensive, immoral, and unacceptable and we oppose it 100%.

I urge you to stop playing political games with transgender youth. Respect the private lives of all Wisconsinites. Stop attempting to restrict our bodily autonomy, our right to privacy, and our right to play sports.

Thank you.

Jo Haberman  
W4490 State Road 35  
Maiden Rock  
54750

Dear Legislators,

I am reaching out to you as a local Wisconsin clergy, to urge you to be in opposition of **AB 465, AB 377, and AB 378. The anti-trans bills contribute to a culture of hate and prejudice, which puts these already very vulnerable youth at risk. My heart breaks knowing how much it hurts the youth in my community just knowing there are some individuals and groups proposing laws to make it harder for them to exist.**

**I urge you to contribute to a culture of safety and peace for children and youth everywhere by opposing AB 465, AB 377, and AB 378.**

**Blessings,**

**The Rev. Dr. Julia Burkey  
Senior Pastor of Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ, Madison, WI**

I am the parent of a transgender child, whom I love and support. I am also a recently retired chaplain. I speak today in support of my child and all of us who need healthcare. I find no justice and no mercy in these proposals to deprive some in our state of healthcare they need. In particular, due to hatred in society, my child has at times been suicidal. If you are a parent, or if you know any children at all, imagine how devastating this is. There is no reason except hatred for you to try and take needed healthcare from my kid. All in our state and country should be getting the healthcare they need, and for many, need to survive. So I ask you to oppose AB 377, 378 , 465. And oppose SB 479&480.

Lissa Field  
1533 N Hall Ave  
Appleton WI 54911

To the Wisconsin State Legislature Committee Hearings:

AB 378, 377, and 465 would prevent trans youth from participating in sports and accessing the healthcare they need, things that should be available to everyone. It's unfair to ban these rights on the basis of gender. A 2022 survey found that 85% of trans and nonbinary youth report that facing ongoing political attacks has been detrimental to their mental health, according to the Trevor Project. These youth need support, not attack.

Marie Baker  
Dodgeville 53533

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed ban on gender-affirming healthcare and the ban of trans K-12 & College Athletes in our state. As a therapist specializing in LGBTQ+ mental health, and an advocate for equal healthcare access, I believe it is crucial to prioritize the well-being and rights of transgender individuals in Wisconsin.

Gender-affirming healthcare is a lifeline for transgender people, especially individuals like my clients. Denying them access to essential medical care, such as hormone therapy or gender-affirming surgeries, would not only be discriminatory but also detrimental to their mental and physical health. Studies have consistently shown that gender-affirming care significantly reduces the risk of depression, anxiety, and suicide among transgender individuals.

Furthermore, as a therapist who has witnessed the positive impact of gender-affirming healthcare on my clients, I can attest to the importance of allowing medical professionals to provide evidence-based care tailored to each individual's unique needs. Banning these treatments would not only infringe on the doctor-patient relationship but also hinder our state's ability to provide comprehensive healthcare for all and support our state motto of "Forward." Banning gender-affirming care would be a huge step backward.

It is crucial to emphasize that gender-affirming care is not only about medical procedures; it's about *affirming someone's identity and promoting a sense of dignity, respect, and self-acceptance*. Denying transgender people the right to access the care they need sends a harmful message that their identities are not valid or deserving of support.

The bans on trans youth and young adults in sports also causes this damage. Sports are a place for students to build relationships, cooperation and responsibility. To deprive a student of that opportunity for reasons that are mostly fear mongering is wrong. According to scientific research, an example being, the British Journal of Sports Medicine, "After 4 months of hormone therapy, transwomen have Hgb/HCT levels equivalent to those of cisgender women. After 12 months of hormone therapy, significant decreases in measures of strength, LBM and muscle area are observed." This means that Trans Women would not have a major physical advantage to their peers. To deprive a student of a sport that can bring them joy, social connection, positive mental health & physical benefits and meaning is cruel and unjustified by science.

I urge you to reconsider this proposed ban and, instead, support policies that prioritize the health and well-being of all Wisconsin residents, regardless of their gender identity. Let us stand together as a state that values diversity, inclusivity, and the fundamental right to healthcare.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope that you will make the right choice in supporting gender-affirming healthcare and ensuring a brighter, more equitable future for all.

Sincerely,

Taylor Clark-Condon, MSW, LCSW  
She/Her/Hers  
Psychotherapist/ Owner & Director  
Nova Mental Health Services, LLC  
4465 N. Oakland Ave. Suite 360  
Shorewood, WI 53211

I oppose Oppose AB 465, AB 377, AB 378.

As an educator in this state, I have seen the extreme mental duress that LGBTQ+ youth navigate as they explore and discover who they are, who their families want them to be, and at times, have to navigate the deeply traumatic times when those two futures are in direct opposition. Adding the government's involvement in limiting medical care and extracurricular choice? That is a dangerous precedent to set - at what point do we let young people, their families, and their providers determine their own futures? I vehemently oppose the Trans Athlete Ban and the Trans Medical Care Ban. This is removing an individual's right to determine their own medical care and life. Wisconsin youth deserve the right to self-determine who they are, and not have the government decide for them based on pseudo science and religious doctrine. How many Wisconsin representatives have attended medical school? How many have science degrees? Why are we spending time limiting the future of our youth and silencing the voice of our Wisconsin?

I'm not sure why our representatives feel the need to engage in viral, outrage-based political theatre when Wisconsinites are struggling under the weight of so much already.

Forward -

Emily Erler  
HS English Teacher  
Milwaukee WI

From: Mary Schulz, 744 E Pacific St, Appleton, WI 54911

To: All committee members for the hearing on AB 377 Trans K-12 Athlete Ban.

I am 100% opposed to this bill. No one knows better what is best for their personhood than the individual and parents involved.

Sincerely meant,  
Mary Schulz



Dear Rep. Kitchens, and the Assembly Education Committee.

My name is Kate Ullman, I live at 1222 9th Ave W, Ashland, WI. I am writing in opposition to AB 377, which prohibits transgender female students (male at birth) from participating in girls or womens sports in Wisconsin Schools. I am aware that one rationale for a bill like this is to prevent what some may perceive as an unfair advantage. This rationale overlooks the role that sports and athletics play in the lives of our children and young adults. High School sports serve as a way for youth to maintain fitness, learn teamwork, develop relationships, feel valued and connected in the school community, learn new physical skills, and grow as individuals and as a team. Winning may be fun, but 50% of teams will lose no matter who is participating. Banning the participation of students who identify as female from female sports prevents this small group of students from gaining the benefits of participation, and makes them feel alienated and ostracized. Transgender kids want to participate in sports to gain the same benefits as other kids and should be welcomed onto whatever team fits their gender identity. This bill will cause real harm to a group of very vulnerable students. Please do not vote to move it forward to the floor of the Assembly.

Sincerely,  
Kate Ullman

To the committee that will be discussing AB 377, AB 378, and AB 465;

It has come to my attention that bills are being proposed to ban gender affirming health care for transgender youth, as well as banning them from school sports.

Don't do it.

As a parent of a transgender young person, I can speak from personal experience to the vital importance of this care for my child. When your child tells you at age 3 that they think God made a mistake, it is heart-breaking. And despite trying to coerce my child to conform to their biological sex, when 10 years later their stated identity never changes, it's not a passing phase. When you finally allow them to express who they are through clothing and a name change, and you see them blossom into a happy, healthy, loving young person... that is real. That is the truth.

The people who oppose this care are falsely claiming to be protecting children. That is a LIE. Gender affirming care is not about forcing children into unwanted surgeries. It is far more nuanced, cautious, and in the end, life-saving care.

Sports participation should be handled on a case by case basis. Pre-pubescent children are not so different that they need to be separated by sex on school teams. Post-pubescent, if a transgender girl has been allowed to access puberty blockers, then she will have no testosterone advantage in sports. There is no need to ban her from being part of a team. A blanket law making statements about the eligibility of all transgender athletes is a cruel punishment; it is not a caring or thoughtful way to protect girls.

Don't listen to the lies being spread by people who talk about my family, but have no personal knowledge of who we are. **Listen to the families that this actually affects!** I would love to share the story of my family with you.

Meanwhile, please oppose AB 377, AB 378, and AB 465.

You can contact me here...

Kathleen Caylor  
3680 Rolling Hill Dr  
Pulaski, WI 54162  
920-865-6500

To the most honorable members of the

Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities
Assembly Committee on Education
Assembly Committee on Health, Aging, and Long-Term Care

As regards the proposed legislation on Trans Youth, please note that I am a licensed psychologist and I have worked with people who have transitioned and those seeking to transition, (and I even have a friend who came out in a men's group I ran during my training for a MSSW degree, before my PhD and license) and I have taken the time to research the topic.

Based on all of my professional and personal information I must plead with you to not limit access to gender affirming treatment and let behavior specialists and medical professionals decide when and what can be done to best support people seeking medical treatment and not government intervention. Nothing is perfect, but a glimpse at the research that has been done and is available to any person interested enough to do their homework before voting.

Those in my professional want to help and not harm this small group of citizens, who are now being persecuted for political points, rather than their own health and happiness. Let's, please, treat people with respect even if they are different from yourselves. There is nothing wrong with respecting people's privacy, especially when those people are being persecuted by politicians seeking favor with bigots.

**Henry Steinberger**

**Henry Steinberger, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist, Master Addiction Counselor (he, him, his)**

From: **Sachi&Laura Komai** <anthologymadison@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 9:52 AM  
Subject: objection to AB 378, AB 377, AB 465  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

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Dear committee members:

I am writing as a Wisconsin business owner and mostly lifetime resident of Wisconsin (we moved here when I was a baby in the 1970s). I object to the bills being considered that targets the individual liberty of citizens of our state. Before I became a business owner, I believed the mythology of the rugged American business owner, toughing it out and doing it all on their own, and then I became a business owner and I realized that all of my work is for nothing if I don't have the customers, and if my customers do not have a life that allows them to treat themselves to stickers and to send thank-you notes and otherwise support my business. I have a hard time understanding how a political party which brags about small government and fiscal responsibility can be so small-minded as to think that meddling in the ways a trans person lives their life is at all beneficial to our community. People should be able to live their lives to the fullest potential - that is not a threat to us, that is what benefits all of us. Please redirect your focus to actions that benefit the majority of citizens you are supposed to be serving: funding for public schools, improving air and water quality, strengthening infrastructure, and finding solutions for homelessness and poverty.

May your pledge to serve this state turn into action that actually serves it so that we move forward together.

Laura Komai, co-owner  
5335 Brody Drive #202  
Madison, WI 53705

--

Anthology  
230 State Street. Stop 1  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703  
on FB and IG @Anthology230  
[anthologymadison.com](http://anthologymadison.com)  
608-204-2644

I strongly oppose AB 377. My name is Mary Rowe. I live in Middleton WI, zip code 53562. I vote in every election.

Dear Republican Legislatures:

Please don't restrict the right of Transgender People.

Sincerely,

Russell J. Novkov

Dear Assembly Committee on Education:

I'm reaching out today regarding some of these bills circulating regarding making trans youth healthcare and sports participation illegal in Wisconsin. I know at first blush, in particular when someone hasn't really encountered trans individuals in their life, it seems that this isn't a big deal to make it illegal -- in particular as trans people make up <1% of the population.

And I'll fully admit, I don't know what it's like to be / feel trans, but I have connected with trans people & parents of trans kids to develop a sense of empathy that I think all people should embark on. Empathy doesn't mean you understand everything that someone is going through, rather you acknowledge their personal situation and make efforts to not make their life more difficult.

I'll also admit I still have lots of questions, but I find **allowing a group to exist AND thrive is a better approach versus putting such extreme restrictions (i.e. passing laws) on how our fellow humans are allowed to live their lives.**

A few things that helped me on my journey of acceptance of trans people that I'd like to share with you. Again, I share these as my own personal path to enlightenment, with the understanding that if you have not engaged your empathy towards trans people and parents of trans youth, my thoughts won't change your mind. But I hope it helps you to think a bit differently and stop putting restrictions (passing laws) on people that you don't personally have any familiarity with.

- Trans, Nonbinary (neither male nor female), Intersex, etc. people have always existed. Many cultures have long acknowledged the existence of humans & individuals that are neither 100% male or 100% female. **Our modern day society is just coming around to this and trying to create a path of acceptance, which I find to be a good thing on the grand scheme of humanity's progression.** Passing these laws isn't going to make trans people cease to exist, it will just make their life that much more difficult.
- Youth suicide is one of the leading cause of death in young people and **Trans Youth attempted suicide rates are more than 7 times the rate of their peers.** The lack of acceptance -- i.e. laws passing to outlaw their existence and ability to thrive -- play a big role in this. Instead of fighting this, we need to wrap support around trans youth and allow their families the space & (adequate) resources -- not criminalize them.
- Allowing and supporting kids to grow into themselves is an important part of their development. I've got such high hopes for this upcoming generation and our generation of parents for letting go the shackles of children being "seen and not heard" and instead respecting the feelings, thoughts and realities of being a young human. **Giving children & families a supportive environment is more important than restricting the help families can provide their own children.**
- Laws Banning Trans Athletes often require a youth to validate their gender. I ask you, how is this to be accomplished? Will inspections of genitals become a requirement to satisfy the desire to prevent trans athletes from participating? Will a masculine woman be required to go through this? Who makes the call? **This has the potential to have a HUGE ill affect on EVERY YOUTH ATHLETE.** What is the better -- have trans athletes compete (of which this is a very small number) or have all students be required to "prove" their gender. **This is an example of laws being made without considering the execution of the law and its negative impact.**

I'm just so exhausted with moves like this to control people and their lives, politicians imposing their own personal beliefs & religious viewpoints on the general populace. This is not progress and I feel it's not even in the spirit of what Christ would teach if he were alive today.

And while I'm certainly not asking you to jump in and become a Trans activist, I am **asking you and your colleagues to take a step back and not push these harmful laws into place.** If you don't understand something, the best approach is to listen to those that are going through it and not wield your power to oppress what you don't understand.

As always, thank you for your service, but please don't support these draconian, hurtful and harmful laws.

Peace + Love,  
Angela & Greg Quigley  
2226 N 73rd St  
Wauwatosa, WI  
WI 5th Senate District  
WI 14th Assembly District

Members of the Committee,

My name is Bryan Veldboom. I live in Waukesha, WI 53188 and I'm writing today in the hopes of discouraging you from moving forward with the bills banning trans youth healthcare and prohibiting trans individuals from taking part in organized sports.

These bills strike at the very heart of our individual freedoms and have no place in a free country. Studies have overwhelmingly shown that trans individuals that are unable to receive gender-affirming care have overwhelmingly high suicide rates. Given those facts, I would ask the legislators and those assembled here to consider a few questions.

Do you really want to live in a society in which the state decides what kind of healthcare we are allowed to give our children?

Are you willing to drive people to kill themselves simply because their identity makes a few bigoted people uncomfortable?

Finally, do you want to take away the freedoms of one group of people, knowing that same standard may someday be used target your own rights or those of someone you care about?



Related to Assembly Bills 378, 377, and 465

I am a 69 year old cis gender woman. I have read all three of these bills and see no benefit to the community at large (ie the state of Wisconsin) and only harm and malice to the children and medical professionals that are described in these bills. While they demonstrate no harm to any of us, these bills and the misinformation behind them would greatly harm them. Let the children be children, let them and their parents and medical professionals decide what is best for them. In addition, I see no harm in letting children play a sport of their chosen gender. Sports are supposed to be fun. No transgender child who chooses to play a sport will keep another child from being the next sport super star. Really.  
"Whoever welcomes one of these children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me isn't actually welcoming me but rather the one who sent me"

Jeanne Rickert  
Madison Wis

As a physician and parent in Wisconsin I want to voice my very strong concern about the proposed bans on trans care and trans athlete inclusion in our state. First, as a physician, the data is clear that transgender care is supported by science, advances health and saves lives, and has a very low rate of regret (far lower than other types of surgery). There have been several peer reviewed well designed studies that have reported positive impacts on mental health of transgender care and transgender athlete inclusion. There have been no studies that have shown harm. Indeed, all the professional societies including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Psychiatric Association and the Endocrine Society, that have made statements about transgender care for adults and for minors have come out in strong support of providing comprehensive mental and medical support for trans-identifying children and adults. No medical professional organization has come out against transgender care. To ban this care is similar to banning effective care for Cancer or for stroke. It is cruel and it is unscientific.

As a parent, I state that I want to be allowed to decide, with my child's doctors, in light of the science, unburdened by anybody else's opinion, what is right for my child.

Please do NOT pass an unscientific, cruel ban which restricts parents' rights to care for their children, and for those children to participate and grow into happy contributing members of society. Transgender people have always been with us. They belong and they deserve the best that science can offer them.

Sincerely,  
Ann Helms, MD MS  
Professor Of Neurology  
Milwaukee, WI

I am Quinn Hinaus and I am a resident of Madison (53703) and have lived in Wisconsin for all of my life. I am writing in opposition to the trans athlete ban and trans healthcare ban.

Growing up transgender and closeted, I spent so much time and effort trying to figure who I was "expected" to be and trying to become that person. I bounced around from maladaptive coping mechanism to maladaptive coping mechanism including eating disorders, self-harm, and substance abuse. I was lost and in a cycle of searching for anything to fix what I was experiencing only to end up more astray and disoriented. Luckily for me, this cycle began to be disrupted as I accepted my trans identity and started to live my truth.

Gender affirming health care saved my life. It is what got me through all of it as it addressed the root cause of all of the negative emotions and dysphoria I was experiencing. Transitioning was in no way easy or linear and over time I was slowly able to buy into myself and believe in myself. I learned how to open up and be vulnerable not only with other people but also with myself. I witnessed myself get excited about my future in a way I did not know was possible. I became an active participant in my life and began to mold my life into what I wanted. Through receiving gender affirming healthcare, I have been able to see firsthand exactly how beneficial and life-changing it can be, something everyone who needs it deserves to be able to access.

Lawmakers need to stop using trans children as pawns in their political agendas and hiding behind their desire to "protect the children". Actually protecting the children looks like increasing access to life saving healthcare, understanding the difference between social transitioning (changing names, pronouns, clothes ect.) and medical transitioning (puberty blockers, hormone therapy, and surgeries) as well as know that transitioning for a majority of minors almost exclusively deals with social transitioning. Lawmakers are explicitly going against decades of research and are blatantly ignoring the professional opinion of scientists and healthcare providers. No one wants to make children transgender, but rather we are trying to create a world where children that are transgender make it to adulthood and feel safe while they make it there.

I oppose the attempts to ban trans athletes and gender affirming healthcare and I hope you join me in opposition. Transitioning and gender affirming healthcare saved my life and every other trans person deserves to have the same access to this care.

Best,

Quinn Hinaus

To the Committee on Education,

I am writing today in opposition to AB 377. It is cruel and unnecessary to restrict participation in interscholastic, intramural, and club athletic teams and sports.

With love,

Amanda Werhane  
1615 E. Marion St.  
Shorewood, WI 53211

Aaron Lopez  
Regarding WI State Legislative Hearing  
October 3rd, 2023

Hello,

My name is Aaron Lopez and I am a concerned Dane County resident / soon-to-be parent. I would like to state my formal opposition to the following bills:

Assembly Bill 378 (College trans athlete ban)  
Assembly Bill 377 (K-12 trans athlete ban)  
Assembly Bill 465 (Trans youth healthcare ban)

It is terrifying that legislators are considering bills that are founded entirely on pseudoscience and prejudice. These bills harm and isolate families by restricting freedoms and stripping healthcare from children and their parents. Moreover, it makes Wisconsin a worse place to live by introducing a division that shouldn't exist: there's no world where a cis child's health and lifestyle should be placed above or below that of a trans child.

Please voice your strong opposition to these bills.

Sincerely,  
Your Constituent,  
Aaron Lopez  
(they/them)

Attention Assembly Committee on Education regarding **Assembly Bill 377**:

I am writing to express my opposition to this bill. I am a licensed mental health therapist who has worked in the field of mental health for over 20 years. This bill does harm to our children, families, and our citizens. This bill is not based on firm scientific understanding and a consensus of healthcare professionals. Banning grade school and middle school trans children from sports does extreme harm and in my professional opinion and qualifies as illegal emotional abuse as defined by Wisconsin state statute 46.90 (1)(cm). I understand high school level athletics and the inclusion of trans students becomes more complex. I understand the need for rules and regulations. However, I strongly oppose any bill that does not have the backing of the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Medical professionals not politicians should be guiding and determining legislation that relates to the the physical and mental well being of our children.

Thank you for hearing my concerns.

Amy Plum

Oconomowoc, WI 53066

I oppose SB377 and SB 465. Gender care should be between a family and their doctor, period. Legislators have no business interfering with this matter

Doris Laufenberg  
3146 Forest Run Way  
Madison, Wi. 53793

Kylan Bartel

Regarding AB 377

10/03/2023

Hello,

My name is Kylan Bartel and I am writing to express my concern about AB 377. As a Wisconsin resident, I am testifying about the harm that this bill would pose to transgender individuals, gender-nonconforming individuals, and women who play sports in our state.

I am transgender. In middle school, I was the only girl on the football team (this was before I realized I was trans). After coming out as trans in high school, I continued to play football. Throughout this process, my school, teammates, and coaches were respectful and affirming. No one was harmed by me being on the team—if anything, I think my presence there may have broadened people's perspectives. Perhaps that broadening of perspective is what opponents of transgender inclusion are so afraid of.

I believe that participation in sports promotes mutual respect, self-confidence, and hard work. Sports create community, and in our polarized era, what is more important than that? As you are well aware, there are already measures in place at the K-12 and college level to ensure that the inclusion of transgender individuals does not lead to unfair disadvantages. With these safeguards in place, we have nothing to lose by including transgender individuals in sports. Considering the benefits of sports on community-building, we indeed have everything to gain by allowing people of diverse backgrounds to play together on the same team.

If you are truly concerned about gender equality in sport, there are many real issues that need to be addressed, such as the gender pay gap, unequal media coverage of men's and women's sports, and a lack of women coaches in youth sports and beyond. In fact, excluding trans people from sports will only worsen gender inequality, since policing trans bodies means policing the bodies of any woman deemed "too masculine," "too athletic," etc. There have already been documented instances of cisgender girls being harassed at sporting events due to this anti-trans fervor. To protect women's sports, we need to protect all women, including gender-nonconforming women and women who are transgender.

Thank you for your time. Your consideration of these matters is appreciated.



Emile Gunovich  
4325 De Volis Pkwy  
Madison, WI 53711  
[emile.gunovich@gmail.com](mailto:emile.gunovich@gmail.com)  
7407066551  
October 3, 2023

Dear Representative Kitchens and Dittrich and the Wisconsin Assembly  
Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Assembly Bill 377, which aims to segregate trans and cis youth athletes within Wisconsin's education system. After reviewing the contents of the proposed legislation, I am deeply concerned about its potential impact on our community, and I urge you to reconsider support for this bill.

Transgender and non-binary people, in particular trans and non-binary student athletes, are under attack by politicians at all levels of government, as well as in the media. In 2023 alone, 574 anti-trans bills in 49 states have been introduced.

Young people learn many important life lessons in sports: leadership, confidence, self-respect, self-discipline, what it means to be part of a team, and much more. Sports and athletics are an important part of education—something no child should be denied simply because of who they are. Transgender kids, like other students, deserve the same chances to learn teamwork, sportsmanship, leadership and self-discipline, and to build a sense of belonging with their peers. When we tell transgender girls that they can't play girls' sports—or transgender boys that they can't play boys' sports—they miss out on this important childhood experience and all the lessons it teaches.

Transgender kids want the opportunity to play sports for the same reason other kids do: to be a part of a team where they feel like they belong. We shouldn't discriminate against kids and ban them from playing because they're transgender. As a nation, we decided long ago that discrimination is wrong and that everyone should have the same opportunities to succeed in life—and that should include transgender youth.

I urge you to support public health and LGBTQ+ rights and oppose AB 377. Thank you for your attention and desire to serve all people in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,  
Emile Gunovich, MPH  
4325 De Volis Pkwy  
Madison, WI 53711

To the Committee on Education,

My name is Natalie Hoffman and I live at 559 Rothe St Apt 9 in Green Bay, WI. I am writing to you today to express my strong opposition to AB 377. This bill is actively harmful to the kids you claim to want to protect. It will have a drastic negative impact on kids' mental health, and it will increase their risk of suicide. Trans kids deserve the same rights to play sports as every other kid, and barring them from doing so is fundamentally wrong. We do NOT want these transphobic bills here in Wisconsin. I urge you to vote against this disgusting bill and let kids play sports!

Thank you for your time.

Natalie Hoffman

Hello,

I would like to provide testimony against Assembly Bill 377 (K-12 trans athlete ban). I have many many friends who are transgender, and a bill preventing them from participating in sports with their peers of the same gender would cause severe harm to them. They already are very scared of what other people think of them, and for there to be institutional requirements preventing them from playing with their peers would make it much worse. They deserve the same as everyone else: to be allowed to play on sports teams with other people of their gender. Particularly where it concerns young children, forcing a girl to play on a boy's team or a boy to play on a girl's team can and will cause severe self-image issues beyond all the ones they already experience.

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Hankins  
(she/her)

Dear members of the Assembly Committee on Education,

My name is Barb Farrar, and I am a resident of Racine. I've lived in Wisconsin for 14 years. I am also the Executive Director of the LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin. The Center exists in part to protect our transgender and non-binary community who experience discrimination daily.

I urge you to vote NO on Assembly Bill #378. As a Wisconsinite, I am opposed to this bill because it is discriminatory. Rather than moving legislation towards equity for everyone, this bill divides us in new and disturbing ways.

K-12 athletics is about inclusivity, setting individual goals, working as a team, and creating confidence and a sense of well-being. If we think winning is the only goal of K-12 athletics, we have lost the purpose of 7-18-year-olds competing in sports.

Trans youth athletes deserve the same access to sports as everyone. No one should be denied the experience of being involved with a team, to grow their self-confidence and physical and emotional health. Trans youth athletes can only truly enjoy sports if they can participate on teams that align with their gender identity.

If passed, this bill will hurt everyone, including those team members denied the experience of being on a team with a trans person. It would be a missed opportunity for inclusion, acceptance, and learning to celebrate differences if trans youth were alienated from youth sports.

This bill would also disproportionately affect transgender and cisgender youth's privacy. No one should have to go through the scrutiny of their sex and sex characteristics to play soccer in Wisconsin. That would leave our college athletes vulnerable on many levels.

Vote no on AB 377.

Sincerely,

Barb Farrar (she/her)

Racine, 53403

Dear members of the Assembly Committee,

My name is Lilith Pieper, and I am a resident of Dane County. I've lived in Wisconsin for 2 years and have been living in the Wisconsin area, as an active community member for my entire 26 years.

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Assembly Bill #AB 388, AB 378, and AB 465. As a Wisconsinite, I am opposed to this bill because I find that this is a reactionary cause that was never rooted in support of any of the activities, but in providing a barrier to transgendered individuals from having similar access as cisgendered students. I as a transgender person, I never felt safe or accepted enough to come out with my actual gender, and the fact that this same discrimination and hate has continued for almost an entire decade when we should have been past this nonsense by now is infuriating.

If passed, this bill will cost lives. At a time when LGBTQ+ youth are already struggling with harassment and discrimination, we should be making it clear that they are safe and welcome in Wisconsin.

I don't believe politicians should interfere with personal, private medical decisions that should only be made between patients, their doctors, and their families.

Sincerely,

Lilith Pieper

Dane County, 53713

Members of the committee;

I am saddened to see the continual effort to further alienate individuals. As a parent of a nonbinary child I have extra worries that they will have to face unnecessary challenges in order to find their way in the world. Nonbinary people, such as my child and their friends, have many internal challenges to overcome. Many nonbinary people already feel alienated and have other negative feelings that limit their ability to find a happy and safe place where they can be themselves. The role of the government should be to protect people from the types of unnecessary struggles other minorities have and continue to face. History has demonstrated many times over that a lack of unity or excessive divisions only lead to failure. We may all take different paths, but are generally headed to the same destination.

On a side note we extremely grateful for the health care assistance we have and continue to receive. This assistance has afforded us the ability to help him on his journey (not only physical, but mental as well) much more than we could have on our own.

I kindly request that you oppose AB 377, AB 378, and AB 465 as well as SB 479 and 480.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Brian Valiquette

1111 Stonewood Xing

Sun prairie, WI 53590

Best Regards,  
Brian

From: **Libby Gerds** <libbygerds@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 8:33 AM  
Subject: Opposition to AB 377  
To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Dear Assembly Committee,

I'm writing as a constituent to express my strong opposition to AB 377. This bill is discriminatory, unfair, and dangerous to some of the most vulnerable populations in Wisconsin. I urge you to defeat this effort, and stand with all children and athletes on the side of fairness and respect. Please take a moment to remember the athletes in question are *children*. They want to participate, they want to play, and they want to be included just like all children desire and deserve. Their safety, inclusion, and joy are just as important and worthy as all other children.

Bills like this create an unsafe atmosphere for children and families in Wisconsin, and I ask you to please oppose them forcefully.

Thank you,

Libby Gerds

[libbygerds@gmail.com](mailto:libbygerds@gmail.com)

651-303-3656

Madison, WI

Hello,

I would like to state my formal opposition to Assembly Bill 377. This bill is not based on science, and numerous peer reviewed studies have shown that there is a minimal to non-existent advantage of trans athletes in competition with their cis peers. Most importantly, all this bill does is others a group that is already vulnerable. Trans people make up a beautiful part of our Wisconsin community, and this bill hurts people I care about – and probably that you care about. I plead you to oppose this bill, and focus your time and energy on supporting communities instead of hurting them.

Sincerely,

Spencer Bierman

He/Him/His



Dear lawmakers of the state of Wisconsin,

I have lived in this state my entire life, it is my home that I love, and that I know you care about as well. I can say without a shadow of a doubt that the bills being introduced today are a slap in the face to someone who so deeply loves Wisconsin. The bills before you today are nothing but blatant attacks at a group of people who are only trying to live their lives. What does it say to these kids that lawmakers want to prevent them from playing a sport simply because of their sex at birth? Why are you so obsessed with the gender identity of children and young adults that you would strip them of the opportunity to play sports? Why do you feel the need to ban them from healthcare that could save their lives? Who has hurt you so deeply that you feel the need to punch down at children whose lives could be saved with gender affirming care? Would you be against this bill if it was your child? Imagine your child's face right now, imagine telling them you voted this bill into law and now they can't play on their team, their dreams of playing on their college team are crushed, their healthcare is gone and you are the one who took it from them. The children and young adults you are attacking are a constantly trodden on group, people who only ever wanted to live and be happy like anyone else. A recent study shows that 82% of transgender individuals have considered suicide at some point and 40% attempting, with the highest number being among transgender youth. By continuing your attack on transgender youth and young adults, you are guaranteeing a spike in suicide attempts and successes. Think of your own child, about how you would feel if they made that choice. If you pass these bills, you are personally responsible for the pain and suffering countless families will face when their child would rather die than live in a state that clearly does not care for them. Make the right decision, do not pass these bills.

Thank you,

A trans Wisconsinite

Dear WI legislature,

As a transgender Madison resident, I urge the state legislature to vote "NO" to AB 377 ban on trans youth. This ban is blatant discrimination against transgender KIDS. Trans kids just want to play sports. They do not deserve to be banned from playing sports with their peers. Trans kids do not have the "upperhand" Republicans like to think they do. I encourage equality for all children, including trans kids in sports.

Republicans should be focusing on issues that actually matter like climate action, stricter gun safety laws, inflation and the cost of living crisis. There are more important issues to spend time on.

Respectfully,

Thunder Tomcheck  
He/They  
2941 Fish Hatchery Rd  
Madison, WI 53713

I demand that Wisconsin politicians stop playing political games with the lives of trans youth. They deserve to live their lives freely. The trans community demands to be treated fairly like anybody else. I oppose the Medical Care Ban and Trans Athlete Ban.

Krista Eastman  
Madison, WI 53715

Dear Rep. Kitchens, and the Assembly Education Committee.

My name is Liz Kuchinka, I live at 1024 Grandview Blvd, Washburn, WI. I am writing in opposition to AB 377, which prohibits transgender female students (male at birth) from participating in girls or women's sports in Wisconsin Schools. It is my fear this bill is being introduced to garner votes in the upcoming election without thinking of the real consequences to real people. Sports should be a place for all students to gain lifelong skills without fear of not be included for some perceived threat. Transgender kids want to participate in sports to gain the same benefits as other kids and should be welcomed onto whatever team fits their gender identity. This bill will cause real harm to a group of very vulnerable students. Please do not vote to move it forward to the floor of the Assembly.

Sincerely,

Liz Kuchinka

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Rachael Cera-Alinas. I live at 331 W. Wabash Ave. In Waukesha.

I am also a VERY proud mother and aunt to two transgender young adults; both of whom started their transition while adolescents.

Transgender adolescents are twice as likely to attempt, or commit suicide due to the stigma, rejection by family and friends, and bullying by classmates. All of those experiences (among others) irreparably traumatize those transgender youth. That trauma leads to the extreme decline in the mental health of those transgender youths. Now, you all are attempting to stigmatize and segregate and oppress them legally.

My son and nephew are amazing humans. They are kind, gentle, loving, outgoing, caring, giving people. But, that is today. The road they had to go down to reach this point was wrought with excruciating mental and physical anguish and pain, even though they had very accepting, loving, and supportive parents.

Imagine, if you're capable, being born without a nose. Just holes in the middle of your face. They function just fine. You're able to breath without any difficulties. You just don't have the nose that everyone has. Now, again, imagine, if that was your child, or grandchild. Wouldn't you do ANYTHING to help give your child a nose one way or another? Surgeries, detachable prosthetic noses, face masks. Anything to make you or your child or grandchild look and FEEL "normal"? The technology is there for you to have a nose. The medicine is there, but the government told you that you were not allowed to fix this birth defect? And doctors are mandated not to treat this birth defect in any way.

Imagine the mental trauma you, your child, or grandchild, would experience? Being stared at wherever you go. Being made fun of by classmates and strangers. You criticizing yourself. Crying every time you look in the mirror. Calling yourself horrible names. Becoming physically aggressive towards your own body because you hate yourself so much. The feelings of being out of control. Being angry that, even though you can afford to pay for a nose, doctors are forbidden from helping you, by the government. The knowledge that you have absolutely no body autonomy.

Oh, by the way, government also mandates that you are not allowed to participate in the swim team at any level. Even though your birth defect has ZERO affect on your ability to be the best swimmer the world has seen. You are legally not allowed, because of something you had no power or control over. It was just something you were born with. Sure, your parents love you with or without a nose. Sure, you would love your child, or grandchild without a nose. But the government has taken away your ability to help yourself or loved one. The government has taken away your rights to do to your body what you wish. The government has taken away your right to participate in the sport you love most. The government has taken away your bodily autonomy. The government controls your body; not you.

I have witnessed, first hand, the mental anguish that trans adolescents have had to endure. I have witnessed the absolute trauma my son went through every month when he would get his period. Fortunately, I was allowed to help my son. My sister was allowed to help her son. We were also witnesses to the incredible resurrection of our loving, kind, gentle children when they went through their transition. They were no longer depressed to the point of being non-functional. And my son stopped cutting himself because he hated his body so much. And the fear that I had that my son would not be able to handle the hatred and disgust he had towards his body and would kill himself, went away as well.

Do not take away the right of every parent to help their children. Do not take away the right of every transgender youth to match their brains to their bodies; to "fix" their birth defect. Let them live the life that every other non-trans person gets to enjoy. Play the sports they love, and enjoy the same bodily autonomy that you enjoy.

Thank you,  
Rachael C. Alinas

Dear Committee Members,

I write today to express my strong **opposition** to **AB377** (the Transgender Athlete Ban).

This bill purports to solve problems that don't exist and would in fact do grave harm to youth in Wisconsin.

The participation of trans girls in sports does not harm or disadvantage non-trans girls in any way. Transgender children vary in their ability to excel in sports, just as non-transgender children do. Efforts to exclude them perpetuate the myth that boys are somehow better at sports than girls., that girls are weaker, that girls are less.

Furthermore, at the college level, trans women athletes who meet NCAA standards have absolutely no physiological advantage over non-trans women athletes. There is absolutely no scientific basis to claim otherwise.

Transgender kids face discrimination and violence that can make it difficult for them to even stay in school. This bill would further that discrimination. According to the CDC, transgender youth are three times more more likely to attempt suicide than cis gendered youth. Three out of 10 trans kids have attempted to end their life at least once. This bill would further eliminate critical opportunities for inclusion and improved mental health. It would further stigmatize and endanger this already vulnerable population.

There is ample evidence that providing opportunities for youth to participate in sports improves their mental health, their academic achievement and their future aspirations. This bill would take that opportunity from hundreds of children across our state, providing no real benefit, and causing very real harm.

Please vote against AB 377 and any other efforts to ban trans kids from sports. Let kids play.

Sincerely,

Lisanne Nelson Brandon  
3018 N Interlaken Drive  
Oconomowoc WI 53066

From: **Melissa Kellor** <mkellor@tds.net>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 8:56 AM  
Subject: Don't ban trans athletes  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

If the state legislature is so concerned about fairness it should vote for a non-partisan district mapping committee instead of worrying about a non-issue like trans athletes. Stop trying to ban people from doing things and let people do the activities they've trained to do. Science shows trans athletes do not have any special advantages so let them be!

Missy Kellor  
Verona, Wisconsin

Sent from my iPhone



From: **Sami Zimmerman** <samizimmerman04@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 8:49 AM

Subject: Testimony against anti-trans bills

To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Hi, my name is Sami Zimmerman and I live in Blue Mounds, Dane County 53517. I am in strong opposition to bills AB-377 AB-378 and AB-465. To put it succinctly, when I was a kid, I remember praying that I wouldn't be gay or trans because it would be too difficult. This is a huge failure, or a careful design of our system. Now I pray for the blessing being trans is. I want our queer and trans youth to feel so much ease in their "interpretations of happiness" (thank you Lou Sullivan). I want them to play sports and feel good in their bodies and to get access to care. No youth should have to pray to not be themselves, just for the burdens our legislature bears on them. Trans is beautiful, so so beautiful and we all benefit from empowering and protecting trans lives.

Sent from my iPhone

From: **Peter Tarson** <PTarson@davidsononline.org>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 9:02 AM  
Subject: Testimony against bills AB465, AB377, and AB378  
To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Dear Assemblypeople,

I am Peter Tarson, a high school student and close friend to many families directly impacted by the bills AB465, AB377, and AB378, restricting gender transition care and requiring trans children to participate on the sports teams of their birth sex. I would like to beg Wisconsin to refrain from passing these lest it deny people so dear to me their humanity, belonging, and safety in public.

I understand that you wish to protect people by restricting transgender healthcare. But you are not protecting people, only an image of them, an image that causes them to squirm in falsehood. It frightens you to understand a child's nausea at a chest that is false for your internal God-woven beauty, to feel the needle bristle violation of facial hair, to feel a skirt that throws you behind waves of overwhelm. The feeling you feel when you imagine if you had transitioned is the feeling they feel every day they do not have trans healthcare.

I understand that the sports bills are meant to protect "*innocence of other sexes*," but this very construct pathologizes human bodies and promotes shame and division. Men fearing women does not protect women, not even cis women. It creates the suspicion and dehumanization that promote rape culture and make healthy relationships impossible. Women being segregated from people with male anatomy, not humanizing them by being on the same sports team, makes it impossible for women to expect to share space with those bodies. Learning to coexist across different bodies can later help young women be comfortable reigning cisgender men in from developing rapist attitudes through shared experience and common humanity. The principle of segregating socialization is what leads to the guys-only mentality of rape culture. No wall will ever protect us, only love and sharing. Even cisgender children must learn, nonsexually, to coexist with and celebrate other bodies, and being on sports teams where they affirm the gender of trans people around them builds that.

Banning transgender children from competing on sports teams they identify with is banning them from sports, with the implicit threat of the physical and psychological pain they would experience on a team where they are ever reminded of something excruciating to them, ill at the sight and comparison of the locker rooms. This is not a restriction, it is a barrier to a form of traditional community that bolsters mental health and connects us to one another.

Allowing children to reforge their bodies and team affiliations is allowing them to have voices, which can be frightening because we worry for them. But denying it will create endless pain. I am not transgender but I am a child myself and have suffered immensely when medical decisions were made against my will. I wept and squirmed as I was forced to ingest morphine for a broken arm, and later, when I was forced to tolerate a compulsive spiral without medication to forge my brain to my needs. This inspired me to study biology for several years intensely and have meaningful, beautiful conversations about it. This became my humanity, vulnerable and generative. To force a transgender person onto a sports team where they will feel false and ill in the locker rooms, or force them to pilot a painful body, is to deny them this very humanity. Do you choose to believe this, and to believe your own similar memories? Or do you choose to hide in the darkness of the room you were sent to to cry without love as punishment?

Whatever you choose, you are worthy. You deserve to revel in the repressed expressions, gyrations, and expansions of humanity alongside all people with care and tenderness.

To admit that transgender people deserve medical care and affirmation in sports is to accept God's offering, enumerated repeatedly throughout the scriptures, that we may share in the act of creation. We become close to Him by embracing our mental capacity to build and discover His love in the world. How else was it when St. Peter founded the Church in Rome and Antioch or Abraham traveled across Mesopotamia? How can we forget this? Will we not build our bodies, words, and minds as His temple by celebrating how they connect us to others and our inner truths? To ban transgender medical care is to force our children into a Miltonian Pandaemonium, where their bodies pressed into a mold of volcanic mercury that standardizes and regiments.

I urge you to release into your fear and into the community of thousands of trans people who are calling for humanity, not to be cast into the shadows and forced to squirm powerlessly. I urge you to sniff and cherish the blossom of bodily and social expression made by the decomposed remnants of our genetics, the petal layers of our minds and hearts, and the aromatic scents of a gift, a sharing with the universe. Trans healthcare gives trans youth the ability to remain youth, not hyper-aware of their sexual bodies by their overwhelming pain. Trans sport access is a renewal of the traditions of community in sports and in school that rural America has cherished for its children for centuries. The urban elitism that has cost Wisconsin so many jobs is not about tolerance, it is about withholding care economically and socially through set standards and shame. Trans healthcare and trans-welcoming sports amplify this community and renew the Rust Belt. The Republic of Front Porches will not be dead when all can sit on the porch.

This is vulnerable because it requires accepting that whatever you carry as a leaden weight in your chest could flower through scientific discovery and loving community, not just about gender but all things. As courageous leaders I urge you to embrace that tension. I am right there with you and will hold you.

I will always see the mental and vulnerable intertwined in you, as politicians, legal scholars, and the soft animals we all are. I will always love you, however you vote and whatever you do. But please allow my friends to be seen, create, and discover.

Take care,  
Peter Tarson

Dear Legislator,

I would like to state my formal opposition to the following bills:

Assembly Bill 378 (College trans athlete ban)  
Assembly Bill 377 (K-12 trans athlete ban)  
Assembly Bill 465 (Trans youth healthcare ban)

These bills are not based on science and sense, but fear and prejudice. Numerous peer reviewed studies have shown the life-saving effects of trans healthcare, and the minimal to non-existent advantages of trans athletes in competition with their cis peers. All these bills will do is isolate and vilify a vulnerable community.

As a former K-12 athlete through the vast majority of my primary school years, this legislation does nothing to 'preserve the integrity of the game' or 'protect the fans and athletes', it only perpetuates the same harms that our already vulnerable neighbors face on a daily basis. Trans youth already face the incredible challenges of social isolation and exclusion due to often bigoted views of others; we don't need to add the power of the state to this harm.

I beg you, please voice your strong opposition to these bills and help protect our trans neighbors and youth.

Sincerely,

**Matt Koz**

[Kozguy@gmail.com](mailto:Kozguy@gmail.com) | 715-571-1577

To the Committee on Education,

I'm a constituent from LaCrosse, WI, and the last year of government interference within the LGBTQ+ has been very scary. Please consider keeping the government out of individuals' rights for bodily autonomy. We're at a critical point in our history where our actions could change everything and with over 500+ anti-LGBTQ+ bills being brought to the floor this year, I ask that you seriously consider how many of those you're putting in harm's way by continuing to back fear-mongering, white Christian nationalist's agenda.

Healthcare is something that should be kept out of this arena. There is too much at stake and too many lives that you're endangering.

We don't have much time left. Please, if you do care for your brothers and sisters in this community, you will do the right thing.

Katie Bakalars  
2104 Travis Street  
LaCrosse, WI 54601

Dear colleagues, friends, legislators,

I am writing to offer a testimony in opposition to bills 377, 378, and 465.

These bills are harmful and discriminatory and exist for no reason other than to cause pain and hurt. There is no evidence that allowing trans kids to participate in sports is harmful to anyone. However, there are mountains of evidence that show that trans kids experience much higher rates of mental health crises. Participation in athletics is such an important way of building, confidence, social connections, and a healthy relationship with one's body. These are things that all kids, and perhaps, especially trans kids, need for healthy growth and development. To ban participation is to actively choose to hurt young people when they are most in need of support and affirmation.

I am also opposed to bill 465, which prohibits medical intervention for gender transition for people under 18. I am shocked and horrified that the legislature would choose to intervene in the lives and decisions of individual families in this way. How could members of the Wisconsin state assembly possibly know more about the best choices for a young person? Then they themselves and their families could? It is not the role of the assembly to make such decisions.

All three of these bills actively seek to do harm to young people. The role of the legislature should be to positively support the growth of individuals and communities in Wisconsin, not harm those same people. I strongly oppose all three of these bills.

Jessica Courtier  
3837 Dennett Dr  
Madison WI 53714

I am writing to state my strong opposition to AB 377.

I play roller derby in Madison, WI. I play seriously, practicing multiple times a week, traveling for tournaments, etc. Roller derby is one of the most trans inclusive sports in the world. I have leaguemates who are trans. I play against teams who have trans players. So my opinion is based on my lived experience.

Trans women belong in women's roller derby, and in women's sports in general. People belong in the sport that aligns with their gender.

This is ABSOLUTELY also true in children's sports. This is an appalling attempt of Republicans to demonstrate for their base that they will exclude anyone trans--never once does it consider the feelings or experiences of the actual trans kids who will be hurt by this. It's hateful and infuriating. Trans kids are at higher risk of suicide due to, in part, cruel and exclusionary bills like this one. The writers of this bill will have blood on their hands.

Elizabeth Holden  
Madison, WI

Dear Entire Committee,

My name is Ellen Sweeney. I'm 41 years old and I am a cis gender female. I grew up in Chippewa Falls, WI and now live in Oregon, WI (104 Elm Street, Oregon, WI 53575). Just to establish character: I played many sports growing up including soccer of which I was the captain of the varsity women's soccer team at Chi-Hi. I graduated college with honors with a BFA in Interior Design. I pay a lot in taxes and have an excellent credit score. When I'm not working my super cool job in interior design, I enjoy quilting, golfing, playing cards, cooking, and spending time with family and friends. Hopefully that establishes my character. My step-brother Andrew Cray passed away from cancer in 2014 at the age of 28. He was an incredible individual.... Humble, intelligent, gregarious, hilarious. .... High-School Valedictorian, did his undergrad at Northwestern, and Law School at University of Michigan.... then worked in Washington DC as a lawyer supporting Human Rights until his death in 2014. Look him up on Wikipedia to see all of the awesome work he did. Andy was transgender. Perhaps you know or have heard of Sarah McBride. She married my step-brother Andy and she is my sister-in-law. She is a member of the Delaware Senate (1st District of the Delaware State Senate). Sarah is currently running for Congress. How amazing would that be for Sarah McBride to be the first openly transgender member of Congress!

Not trying to brag, but I know a lot of transgender people ranging in age from grade school to people in their 70's. Every single transgender person I know are the most authentic human beings. They are "normal" people "just like us". Kids who want to play sports with their friends..... humans who need healthcare. Literally we are all just HUMAN. This legislation is misguided and is simply hateful and harmful discrimination. I'm curious to know if anyone supporting this legislation is related to someone who is transgender? Do they have any transgender friends? Have they even talked to someone who is transgender? The people pushing this legislation are not qualified on the topic and should not be making these decisions. This is not the way. If you are concerned about transgender individuals taking over in the sports world you are simply delusional. Banning 100% of a group of individuals from playing sports due to the small fraction of a percentage that there is the possibility of an advantage is crazy. Some individuals are born more athletically gifted than others. If you are concerned about individual physical advantage, then figure out another way to even the playing field (one suggestion: perhaps limit the circumference of their biceps?). Please let all the kids play all the sports. I oppose this Bill. Please Vote NO on the trans sports ban AB 377.

Thank you,  
Ellen Sweeney (she/her/hers)



Assembly Bill 465  
Haven Slater  
Kenosha, 53142

My name is Haven Slater. I am a resident in Kenosha, Wisconsin and I am writing to the entire committee to address recent anti-trans legislation attempting to be passed and the effects it will have upon trans youth. Assembly Bill 465 is a violation of bodily autonomy, self-agency and freedom and is a restriction on basic human rights. As a transgender man, I know personally the life saving effect that being able to medically transition and align with my gender identity has had upon my mental health, self-esteem and general well-being. Assembly Bill 465 and others such as Assembly Bill 377 and Assembly Bill 378 discriminate against trans youth and help to perpetuate harmful stigmas that isolate trans youth from their peers. Transgender youth will be trans regardless of whether they are allowed to begin the process of medically transitioning and preventing them from accessing gender affirming care increases the dangers that trans youth face instead of protecting them. Trans youth should not have to be worrying about legislation that will strip them of basic human rights and autonomy on top of other issues and anxieties that most youth face. These anti-trans legislation take away these youths' ability to live their authentic lives and experience the joy and liberation that all human beings deserve and should experience. I am asking that legislators not allow this bill to be passed in order to ensure that trans youth's well-being and mental health are protected in the state of Wisconsin. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Good morning committee members,

My name is Alyssa Stowe, I live at 151 E Wilson St, just two blocks away. I'm writing in opposition of the amendment to designate sports in public and private schools based on the sex of the participant.

I could say that there is no scientific or medical evidence to support the claims that transgender athletes have unfair advantages. I could say that there's a number of genetic reasons some athletes may have an advantage over other athletes that have nothing to do with genitals. I could say that subjecting children to the scrutiny of strange adults who desperately want to know what's in their pants is humiliating, traumatic, and perverted. I could scream until I'm red in the face that corresponding hormone levels are all it took to make trans girls an equal player in their gender group. But all of that is hardly the point. The only thing you need to know is They're Just Kids.

Trans kids just want to play the game they love with their friends. Trans kids want to feel accepted and supported. It is not that serious. Children will only think it's unfair if you tell them it is. If you tell them to all have fun, they're just going to have fun. You people are the only ones giving this any kind of stakes. Sure, in high school scholarships may be on the line, but that's where medical information about hormones comes in to assure your anxieties have no base in reality. There is no diabolical plan that trans kids have to infiltrate a sport by dressing and acting like the other gender just so they can be the best. You are giving them way too much credit. Trans children are far more likely to be the ones bullied than the other way around, and it's abhorrent that most of those bullies are adults. And it's really sad that your biggest goal in life is to keep kids from having fun. Seriously, who hurt you?

I am begging you, please find something better to do. You are spending way too much time thinking about children's genitals. It's weird, and it's none of your business.

Thank you for your time, please vote with whatever you have for a heart, or not at all, that works too. And consider therapy.

Alyssa Stowe

From: **Lisa Klimczak** <lklimczak1001@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 9:02 AM  
Subject: Opposition to Assembly Bill 377  
To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

To: Assembly Committee on Education

I am writing to voice my opposition to Assembly Bill 377. As the parent of a transgender, non-binary person, I can attest that the introduction of this bill is harmful to trans youth. We need to be lifting up our children and celebrating diversity. It takes a huge amount of courage for them to live authentically and to transition from the gender assigned at birth. The government has no place in making decisions about how they can live their lives, and whether or not they deserve to participate in sports.

I am a lifelong resident of Wisconsin and am disgusted to see the introduction of bills that threaten transgender youth's existence and identity.

Sincerely,

Lisa Klimczak  
[lklimczak1001@gmail.com](mailto:lklimczak1001@gmail.com)  
Shorewood, WI 53211

From: **Lisa Klimczak** <lklimczak1001@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 9:02 AM  
Subject: Opposition to Assembly Bill 377  
To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

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Sincerely,

Lisa Klimczak  
[lklimczak1001@gmail.com](mailto:lklimczak1001@gmail.com)  
Shorewood, WI 53211

**Wyn Helming**  
**Regarding AB377**  
**October 4th, 2023**

My name is Wyn Helming and I am a concerned Wisconsin resident. I am providing written testimony against Assembly Bill 377 and all other anti-trans bills. This bill is another example of the rampant and increasing violence against not only trans youth, but all trans people.

~\*~

Transgender athletes are already moderated by the WIAA in Wisconsin schools. Pushing a ban such as this one displays your intent to eradicate transgender people from public life.

Bills like this one, as well as anti-trans rhetoric pushed by those who create and support these bills have increased the disdain and vitriol for trans people. These bills further push misconceptions that make life for all children so much harder.

Instead of devoting time to create bills that sow division in our country, focus on creating and keeping supportive child care in Wisconsin that YOUR PARTY is so earnestly destroying. Even better, actually include transgender and nonbinary people in the decision-making process of bills that would directly affect them. I implore those who are scared of transgender people to actually talk to us in good faith. Treat us like human beings, because we are.

Thank you to those who read this testimony with an open mind. Please vote against assembly bill 377.

My name is Kaitlyn Luther at 442 Selden St Columbus, WI 53925 and I oppose the bill AB377 the Trans Athlete Ban K-12. I feel that the government should not have any say on the matter of Trans Rights, let alone when it involves the exclusion of a whole demographic. The argument trying to be made has nothing to do with the supposed sports they are protecting and instead trying to minimize a suffering minority.

This would also hinder any hope for a unified community. Besides, we should be teaching our future generations inclusion, not exclusion.

Be the change,

-Kaitlyn

Daniel Atwater  
523 Grand Oak Trl #208  
Madison, WI 53714

Committee Members,

I am OPPOSED to AB 377. The proposed bill is unfair to young trans athletes and denies them the opportunity to learn and thrive in all the ways that team sports allows. I simply cannot understand that within a state that prides itself on athletics and all things sports-related, that we would place barriers in the way for trans youth to participate in such important activities. We should instead be focusing on ways to make sure they are included and can thrive.

Respectfully submitted,  
Daniel Atwater

It is infuriating to see Wisconsin legislators spend time on such bigoted and harmful bills, attacking people who exist outside a socially-constructed gender-binary. There is a crisis in our state around caring for our kids - underinvestment in the childcare sector, in education, in healthcare, in mental health. I cannot fathom the point in wasting time on legislation that deliberately harms some of our most vulnerable kids. This legislation aims to make them unsafe and feel unwelcome; it does active harm. It shows that Wisconsin is not safe for people like my brother, who was born and raised here but did not stay, in part because of legislation like this that intends to make it unsafe for him to exist here.

Spend your time on actual problems - like funding child care and paying educators what they are worth.

Erica J  
Madison



To the Committee on Education,

As a physician in Wisconsin, I am a strong supporter of promoting physical health by access to athletics and physical activity throughout life. Nowhere is this more relevant than for children and teens whose habits of activity are often formed early on. As a high school cross country runner, my experiences were essential to my health and social development - and transgender students have just as much right to participate in youth sports as every other kid. Banning them from participating in a sports team that is consistent with who they are is discriminatory, unfair, and will impact their lives and health for years to come. This bill must not be passed.

Sincerely,

Melanie Fritz, MD  
Madison, WI 53711

Plymouth Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
2401 Atwood Avenue Madison, WI 53704

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Rev. Leslie Schenk, Pastor  
Phone (608) 249-1537  
lschenk@pcucc.org

October 3, 2023

To: The Committee on Education of the Wisconsin State Assembly

As a person of faith I oppose bills AB377 and AB378 for I believe that Jesus calls us to love one another (Mark 12:28-34, Matthew 22:36-40, Luke 10:25-28), and to love someone means to affirm them and support them along their life's journey. Jesus did not command us to love some people, but rather to love and help one another, especially those oppressed or persecuted, which is the transgender community when such laws are proposed.

I note that rules of appearance in the Bible, such as in Deuteronomy 22:5, are often used by some as scriptural support for antitransgender rules, but I also note that these are the types of rules that Jesus criticized as being too focused on outward conformity rather than inward integrity grounded in the acceptance of God's love.

When we ban transgender and non-binary children and young adults from participating in school sports, we deny them the opportunities afforded to other students to learn leadership skills, teamwork, discipline, and cooperation toward a common goal, all skills that are important for community and good citizenship. When we ban transgender and non-binary children and young adults from participating in school sports, we create divisions among students, and we relegate some students to second-class status, thereby leading to further discrimination, and feelings of unworthiness of being treated with the same dignity and respect as their fellow students.

Using legislation to normalize stigmas put on LGBTQ+ youth leads to greater rates of depressing and suicide. According to the Trevor Project's 2020 National Youth Survey on LGBTQ mental health, 40 percent of LGBTQ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the previous 12 months, with more than half of transgender and nonbinary youth having considered it. These youth are under attack for their very nature, and it is leading to more and more suicides. Such government-imposed discrimination is immoral. Resulting persecution and ostracizing leads to harm and even death, and is therefore immoral.

In my faith tradition we see the differences among us as cherished gifts from a Creator whose whole creation is beautifully and wondrously diverse; we do not see differences as threatening or to be feared.

As a woman who was in high school when Title IX went into effect helping to usher in more equality of access to school sports for girls, I have questions about the impact of transgender individuals competing in women's sports, but this issue is one that should be discussed, studied, and an equitable resolution worked out in community, not legislated by the government.

God's grace is for all, and God intends wellness for all, and that includes social and emotional wellness, which can come in part from participating in school sports. Reject AB377 and AB378, for the sake of our youth and their families, and for the sake of our community.

Peace and blessings,

Rev. Leslie Schenk

From: **Sarah Shatz** <sarahaudreyshatz@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 7:41 AM  
Subject: AB37  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Dear Committee on Bill#AB37

Please do not support this bill. LGBTQ rights are human rights. We are humans. We would appreciate being treated as such.

Sarah Shatz  
1814 Sheridan Drive  
Madison, WI 53704



October 4, 2023

Dear Honored Members of the Wisconsin State Legislature:

PFLAG is a nonprofit which originated in 1972. A mom decided to march next to her kiddo with a sign that said, "I love my gay son." Since that time PFLAG has become a national organization. Its mission is to create a caring, just, and affirming world for LGBTQIA people and those who love them. We established PFLAG Cambridge in October of 2019 to further promote this mission at a local level through eastern Dane and western Jefferson counties. We write to you today as constituents and as PFLAG members.

The world does not treat our LGBTQIA loved ones fairly. The bills known as AB 378 (the college athlete ban), AB 377 (the K-12 athlete ban), and AB 465 (the medical care ban) are stark examples of how transgender people, who already face so many hardships, are treated unfairly based on their transgender identity. Allowing for this unfair discrimination creates further hardships for our loved ones. And for that reason we ask that you vote against these bills.

Discriminatory actions cause additional hardship for the people targeted. The harm this discrimination causes is quantifiable and unacceptable. GLSEN, the Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network, is an organization founded in 1990 which has been gathering data on the safety of LGBTQIA youth in school and their safety for over 20 years. According to their 2021 biannual survey (<https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/NSCS-2021-Full-Report.pdf>) 68.0% of LGBTQ+ students felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression characteristics—50.6% because of their sexual orientation, 43.2% because of their gender expression, and 40.3% because of their gender. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Transgender individuals are nearly four times as likely to experience a mental health condition. NAMI further states that forty percent of transgender adults have attempted suicide. (<https://www.nami.org/Your-Journey/Identity-and-Cultural-Dimensions/LGBTQ>).

Discriminatory actions have real world results. These bills communicate to every transgender person in Wisconsin that the people elected to protect us see them as less than whole, and not worth the same protection and respect as their peers. We strongly urge you to vote against the bills known as AB 378 (the college athlete ban), AB 377 (the K-12 athlete ban), and AB 465 (the medical care ban).

Sincerely,  
PFLAG Cambridge

Dear members of the Assembly Committee on Education  
(AB#377)

My name is Rev. Scott Marrese-Wheeler, and I am a resident of McFarland. I've lived in Wisconsin for 29 years. I am also a Presbyterian minister, serving with the people of Oakland Cambridge Presbyterian Church in Cambridge for the past 10 years. In addition, I have been an educator at the McFarland Middle and High School for the past 13 years. My spouse is a Moravian minister in Madison, serving at Common Grace Church on the east side. We have a son who is a senior at UW-Madison. He is in a relationship with a beautiful person. They are non-binary. We love them! Both our son and his partner were athletes in college.

As a pastor, an educator, a parent of an athlete who was on different athletic teams in both in high school and college, I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Assembly Bill #377.

As a Wisconsinite, a parent and a Christian pastor, I am opposed to this bill for the harm it does to God's own sacred image who our transgender children are created in just as each of us have been. In Genesis 1:26, the writer reminds us that God is non-binary when they write "And God said let "Us" make humankind in Our own image..." In terms we use today, God is gender fluid. Over the centuries, a Patriarchal society assigned God a sex as male. Those who have prayerful and faithfully studied the sacred texts of Scripture know that this assignment of a "gender" to God has led to oppression, abuse and violence against those who would challenge this misinformed biblical view of Scripture. The passage of Assembly Bill would continue this oppressive and abusive view of God's own sacred image. As pastor and an

educator, I have had the honor of experiencing the sacred image of God in and through the students at Indian Mound Middle School and McFarland High School, as well as through the larger Church community. I find the proposed bill AB#377 to discriminate against our “male” athletes. This bill says “males” cannot play on female sports teams, but you are allowing “female” athletes to play on male athletic teams. I am guessing you know the push back you would get from parents of young women who play sports like football and high school wrestling. That is discriminatory and hurtful to our young people who are trans athletes.

As a congregation, we invited the Dr. Jennifer Winters and her spouse, Mike Winters along with their two daughters, Kate and Patricia, to church to learn about Transgender Children and faith. One of their daughter is a transgender child. Dr. Winters and Mike Winters love their daughters. Dr. Winters through her medical practice cares for transgender children and youth and their parents. Your bill would seek to abuse both their own child, and those she provides medical care for, while criminalizing her compassion care for those she serves as a physician.

As an educator, I have come to know a number of our students who are non-binary and transgender. I served as an ally and as a co-advisor of the Gay-Straight Alliance. Some of our students were involved in athletics. AB #377 would discriminate against these young people, barring them from even participating in recreational intramural or club sports. Assembly Bill #377 is a mean-spirited, cruel, and abusive bill towards God’s own sacred image in our children. It is not pro-life or pro-family. As Jesus said in Matthew 25, when you do it to the most vulnerable in our society, you did it to me.” It only contributes the destruction of life and the health and well-being of our youth and young adults.

If passed, this bill will continue to cost lives. At a time when LGBTQ+ youth are already struggling with harassment and discrimination, we should be making it clear that they are sacred human beings, reflecting God's own image. They should be made to be feel safe and welcome in Wisconsin and on sports teams.

As a faith leader, an educator and parent, I don't believe politicians should interfere with personal, private medical decisions that should only be made between patients, their doctors, and their families.

Again, in the name of God, and for the health of our children, I asked that you to vote NO on Assembly Bill #377. Let our youth play sports!

Sincerely,

Rev. Scott Marrese-Wheeler  
Pastor of Oakland Cambridge Presbyterian Church  
6401 Hidden Farm Road  
McFarland, Wisconsin 53558



To The Committee Members:

I attended a meeting last night to inform people about LGBTQ+ issues and I heard there have been over 500 bills like these entered in state legislatures around the country. What a waste of time when legislators should be writing bills to make sure our youth are *getting the health care they need*, regardless of their gender. Bills such as these amount to harassment of trans and gay youth and should not even make it to committee. Please honor the values of democracy and our Bill of Rights and stop this kind of discrimination. I urge you to vote against these bills.

Virginia Coburn  
2 Coburn Ln.  
Whitewater, WI 53190

To whom it may concern,

Banning trans athletes and banning medical care for transgender individuals is wrong. Transgender individuals are human beings with civil rights. They have the same rights to participate in activities and to access healthcare as anyone else. Singling out this small segment of the community to specifically deny them civil rights unconstitutional and unamerican. As a family physician, I care for transgender individuals. Gender affirming care saves lives and harms no one. Legislation like this does only harm and no good for our great state.

Sincerely,  
Madelaine Tully MD

Hello, my name is Ash. I am a very concerned U.S. citizen. I identify myself as non-binary and deaf. I am currently taking medications to treat Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS). One of them is a critical medication, in a birth control form, that prevents the worst types of cancers—ovarian cancer is one of them AND they do help with other symptoms. The primary reason I am sharing my testimony is because I am in this fight helping fight to protect the non-binary, intersex, and transgender individuals and their rights. Every day I deal with people making assumptions and judging my body assuming that I am transitioning. I ask people to please stop outing non-binary, intersex, transgender, and women who have Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) and judging them based on how they are perceived. I support bodily autonomy and the freedom to access healthcare.

I, Ash Radonski, oppose the AB 465, AB 378, and AB 377 bills. Thank you!

**TO: Assembly Committee on Education**

**FROM: Rev. Douglas Clement, United Methodist Pastor**

**DATE: October 2, 2023**

**RE: Assembly Bill 377 – designating athletic sports and teams operated or sponsored by public schools or private schools participating in a parental choice program based on the sex of the participants**

My name is Rev. Douglas Clement, my pronouns are he/him/his, and I am an ordained United Methodist pastor serving in the state of Wisconsin. I am writing in opposition to the proposed AB 377.

Growing up, I was taught that being a Christian and being an American meant embracing the wide diversity of thought, practice, and personhood that exists in our communities. I remember learning how Jesus told us we were to “love one another” (John 13:34) and how, as people living in the United States, we had the right to “live, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”. While there have certainly been times when we haven’t always lived up to these ideals, the act of striving for them (and of believing they should be for all people) were (as I understood it) fundamental to who we are.

As a United Methodist, I am part of a tradition and a movement that has fought throughout our history to make this a reality. Our own Social Principles call us to “work toward societies in which each person’s value is recognized, maintained, and strengthened” and to “deplore acts of hate or violence against groups or persons based on race, color, national origin, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, status, economic condition, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religious affiliation.” (§162, *The United Methodist Book of Discipline, 2016*). Which is why I feel compelled to speak out against these bills.

AB 377 seeks to amend statute 118.13, carving out from the broader “...no person may be denied admission to any public school or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, pupil services, recreational or other program or activity...” an exception to bar transgender students from participating according to their gender identity. By singling them out because they are transgender, this bill gives credence to the falsehood that they are somehow “dangerous” and “unsafe to be around”. It gives space for hateful rhetoric, for bullying behavior, and for discriminatory practice. In fact, it *requires it* (by prohibiting these individuals from participating in athletics and other extracurriculars according to their gender identity).

There are multiple instances, both in scripture and in the history of our nation, where we have witnessed the consequences of our failure to include and care for those on the margins. As the Apostle Paul observed in his letter to the churches in Corinth, we are all members of one body (i.e. community). “If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.” (1 Corinthians 12:26). Yet, rather than encouraging this kind of relationship and community-building, proposed AB 377 creates further division among young transgender folks and their peers (at a time when they are most in need of such relationships), and puts them at greater risk for lasting harm.

The truth is, our brothers, sisters, siblings who are transgender are made in the image of God, same as you or me. They deserve the same love, acceptance, and affirmation. They deserve the same chance to be able to share their skills, talents, and passions. And they deserve to participate with their peers *according to their gender identity*.

I ask you to give them the same opportunities that have been afforded to generations of young folks. Vote “no” on AB 377.

Regarding AB 377,

I am a Wisconsin resident and have been almost my entire life (a few months in Chicago and I came running back), and I am disappointed to see bill AB 377 introduced. It is based on prejudice and disrespect, inserts the government where it is not needed, and targets a vulnerable population to distract from real problems this state has. I am against it, and do not wish to see it move forward.

A ban on trans athletes in K-12 is unnecessarily harmful and not needed. For K-12, the WIAA exists in our state to handle issues like this, not a broad state ban without nuance. Sports are a wonderful part of childhood, and all should have the option to participate. Any concerns brought up with a student-athlete should be handled with care and significant consideration by the specific governing body, not a broad ban by our state government.

Please do not advance this bill. Don't let this wonderful state be stained by this hate-filled bill.

Thank you,  
Ben Helming  
he/him



Testimony Submissions &lt;testimony@fairwisconsin.com&gt;

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**Testimony in opposition to AB 377, AB 378, and AB 465**

1 message

**Amy Washbush** <amy.hilgendorf@gmail.com>

Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 7:59 AM

To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com

Dear Assembly Committee,

I am writing to ask to firmly and vocally oppose AB 377, AB 378, and AB 465.

As the parent to a nonbinary child, it is heartbreaking to see these bills come forward. My child deserves to thrive as much as any other child. These bills make them feel as if they don't belong, as if they can't pursue the sports and activities that other children can, and that they can't trust our medical providers to care for them. There is nothing wrong with my child. They are who they are and they deserve the same as every other child, boy, girl, or however they identify.

As a lifelong female athlete, I can say with confidence that this call to ban trans girls and women from sports is ridiculous and only intended to do harm. I have been fortunate to count as teammates and opponents trans women, and I stand in strong support of their right to access the sports we all find empowering and enriching.

I and other Wisconsinites like me demand politicians stop playing political games with the lives of trans youth. They deserve to live their lives freely. The trans community demands to be treated fairly like anybody else.

We must stand up for the privacy, freedom, and bodily autonomy of LGBTQ+ Wisconsinites and keep politicians OUT of our healthcare. We support the freedom to access healthcare and oppose the Trans Medical Care Ban, which would deny life-saving care to trans youth.

Sincerely,

Amy Washbush  
107 Sutherland Court #226  
Madison, WI 53704



Testimony Submissions <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

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## AB 377

1 message

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Angela Shetler <angela.shetler@gmail.com>

Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 8:06 AM

To: "testimony@fairwisconsin.com" <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

To the Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my **opposition** to bill AB 377. This bill would harm trans and non-binary youth and infringe on rights to privacy, bodily autonomy, and the freedom to access healthcare.

Angela Shetler  
122 State St  
Oregon, WI 53575

10/4/23

Dear Assembly Committee on Education,

I'm writing asking you to protect the health and wellbeing of trans kids and vote no on bill 377. Please allow them to play on the sports teams that they identify with and protect their access to lifesaving medical care. Banning health care and criminalizing doctors is inhumane and barbaric. Banning children from athletics is cruel. These bills are extremely harmful to our LGBTQ+ communities. They are a blatant attempt to codify discrimination and perpetuate damaging, inaccurate, and deeply offensive stereotypes against the trans community. People deserve to freely be who they are without shame, exclusion, or taking away their bodily autonomy. There are all kinds of studies that clearly show the harmful and deadly impacts these types of laws have on people, especially children. We should be nurturing, loving, and affirming trans kids, their lives depend on that. These bills are the opposite of that and will do nothing but do nothing but threaten the lives and well being of children and families.

Please vote no on the bills to ban access to athletics, medical care, and criminalizing doctors.

Thank you for your service,

Lorrie Hurckes  
501 W South St  
Stoughton, WI



From: **Sandra Johnson** <smjohnso@charter.net>

Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 8:22 AM

Subject: AB 377

To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Dear Committee members,

I am a concerned citizen who wants you and your elected colleagues to reject AB 377. This bill as written would ban transgender and non-binary students in all public schools and all private schools participating in the parental choice program from participating on sports teams that align with their gender identity. The Committee on Education should vote against this bill.

Research by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network indicates that legislation like this encourages an environment hostile to LGBTQ kids, a group already targeted by bullies and harassment. Let the kids play.

Legislation made at the expense of these students, that targets a small group while knowing the result will be harmful, is wrong.

Thank you,  
Sandra Johnson  
Fitchburg WI

Dear Members of the Wisconsin State Assembly,

I want to urge each of you to oppose AB 377, AB 378 and AB 465. No one in this legislature is the medical or mental health provider for all of the trans, non-binary or gender non-conforming (TNG) youth in Wisconsin. The medical consensus at this time is that supportive mental health services, social inclusion, inclusive athletics and gender-affirming medical care serve the best interests of TNG folks and have no ill effects on cisgender individuals. Therefore, the legislature of this great state should not mandate the harmful exclusion of TNG people from athletics nor should they restrict what medical care TNG people can access.

Sincerely,

Jolin Mitchel  
Madison, WI 53704

I stand against the anti-trans bills AB 378, AB 377, and 465.

Banning trans youth from sports is based on incorrect information and personal prejudices. Trans kids should be allowed the same opportunities as their peers to enjoy sports and have fun with their friends. Let kids play!

Banning gender affirming medical care for trans kids is harmful and misguided. Its authors say they are protecting children, but if enacted, this policy would cause significant harm to the kids they profess to care about. We need to let young people, their families, and their doctors make the appropriate health care choices for them, not legislators.

This onslaught of attacks on transgender youth feels like a deeply cynical attempt to manufacture controversy and fear, at the expense of the very young people these bills promise to "protect." Wisconsin Republicans need to stop picking on trans and non-binary kids, and get back to the business of governing!

With regards,

Catherine Watkins  
Madison, WI 53704

Dear members of the Assembly Committee on Education,

My name is Lori Severson. I am a lifelong Madison resident, and I am a mother of three. My middle child is Transgender and she is thankfully 19 years old so this bill would not affect her. But I this bill would affect my neighbors, my youngest daughter's softball teammate as one example of many, and the dynamics of our public schools, which informs our entire community.

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Assembly Bill 377. As a Wisconsinite, I am opposed to this bill because all children, all people should have equal access to sports. It is widely understood that participation in sports is key to youth development. Physical activity, teamwork, developing soft skills, building confidence - so much is learned and experienced through sports. When transgender youth are supported, they show significant increases in self-esteem and general health. Being a kid is hard enough. We don't need politicians making it even harder for kids who are transgender. Preventing transgender kids from participating with their peers in sports would legally ostracize them, denying them physical activity, social outlets and the ability to be a part of a team is discriminatory and teaches other children and society at large that bullying and harassment is ok, that separate but equal is ok, that hating others is ok. This is wrong. This is dangerous. And I urge you to vote no.

If passed, this bill will cost lives. At a time when LGBTQI youth are already struggling with harassment and discrimination, we should be making it clear that they are safe and welcome in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Lori Severson

Madison, WI 53711

Dear Committee on Education

My name is Melinda Knuth , I am the mother of a transgendered young person and have worked for over 20 years in the areas of crime and crime prevention .

I strongly oppose bill AB377

The reason for my opposition is the harm caused by such blanket prohibitions. Most children in our k-12 schools would not be impacted by the designations in this bill. They wouldn't even know there were changes or that anything was different.

Unfortunately for the students and families that will be impacted by this legislation, the harm caused will be devastating. Young people have so many challenges to face and all evidence indicates that connection to school, connection to a positive adult outside of a family , feelings of belonging , connection to peers - all of these connections are THE most important things to prevent violence - perpetration or victimization.

If a young person is unable to connect with their school community, possibly through athletics the harm could be irreparable . That young person is statically more likely to lose interest in school, engage in self harming behaviors .

This bill protects no one but has so much potential to cause harm.

I ask all of you to think about what you remember most about your school years and where you learned the most . Most likely it was on a team of some sort . This is where you were able to set goals for yourself, challenge yourself, win / lose, learn the importance of follow through and consistency and to feel like part of something bigger than yourselves. Sports teams are the best teachers for skills and qualities we need to be healthy connected adults.

The risk of taking away that opportunity from a young person is too great. The rewards of allowing young people to figure things out makes all the difference.

On a personal note - when I went to school I helped manage the boys wrestling team. I went to a very small high school with limited sports opportunities . I did not play basketball so what was I supposed to do over the winter to stay in shape for track . The wrestling coach was the girls track coach- so he allowed me to lead portions of the practices . I started to admire the physicality of the sport so I asked if I could participate in some small meets. I was provided that opportunity. I didn't continue on as a wrestler but I gained an appreciation for the sport, and recognition and respect from the team mates that I had been willing to try. It also provided those boy athletes a rare opportunity to compete with a female student on equal footing.

I oppose AB377

Thank you for your time

Melinda Knuth  
Madison WI 53716

Dear Committee on Education -

Please do NOT vote for Bill AB 377. This bill discriminates and should not be a part of Wisconsin's legacy. I do not want to live in a state that discriminates.

Thank you,

Marjorie Stoneman  
Whitewater, WI 53190

Hello,

Exclusion of transgender people in sports due to assumed advantages is rooted in sexism and lack scientific basis. We lack rigerous and significant data proving that there is any competitive advantage held by transgender athletes.

Additionally, exclusion of transgender people in sports encourages gender policing that causes bullying. According to the U.S. Trans Survey, 22 percent of trans women who were perceived as transgender in high school were harassed so badly they had to leave school because of it and an additional 10 percent were kicked out of school. Further excluding transgender people through sports bans only feeds into discrimination against them.

Thank you,  
Natalie Wieber

Dear members of the Assembly Committee, my name is Hannah Francis, and I live here in Madison, WI. I'm an avid elite age-group triathlete, trail runner, and former DIII collegiate swimmer. I have trained and competed with athletes across the gender spectrum, including trans athletes who I'm deeply grateful to call my friends and family. I have found so much joy in training and competing with these athletes, and they deserve a safe space in athletics. It would be a detriment to all sports to ban any athletes from playing or competing, and I urge you to oppose AB377 and vote no on the trans sports ban. Thank you for voting no to AB377 and keeping sports accessible and safe for all athletes. I look forward to seeing everyone at local triathlons next summer.

Best,

Hannah



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 4th, 2023

For more information: [info@fairwisconsin.com](mailto:info@fairwisconsin.com)

## **Wisconsin LGBTQ+ Policy Coalition Condemns the State Legislature's Transgender Medical Care Ban and Athlete Ban**

The Wisconsin LGBTQ+ Policy Coalition is a group of community organizations and local leaders dedicated to preventing the passage of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation in our state. The coalition advocates for pro-equality policies from the local to state level, from Eau Claire to Milwaukee, Beloit to Superior, and everywhere in between – to create a more just and inclusive Wisconsin for LGBTQ+ people.

Members of the LGBTQ+ Policy Coalition issued the following statement in response to the Transgender Medical Care Ban and the Transgender Athlete Ban introduced in the State Legislature:

*The so-called "Help Not Harm Act" does the exact opposite of what its name suggests. This cruel bill functions as a total ban on gender-affirming care in Wisconsin for minors, and would deny life-saving care to transgender and non-binary youth in our state. It will cost lives.*

*At its core, this is an extreme example of politicians once again inserting themselves into private healthcare decisions between doctors, patients, and their families. Politicians should not be interfering with personal medical decisions, let alone deciding the best course of action taken by parents and doctors to support the wellbeing of LGBTQ+ youth.*

*Every major medical organization, including the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, agrees that gender-affirming care is safe, beneficial, and appropriate for*

*transgender and gender non-conforming youth. Patients of all ages, alongside their families and doctors, should be able to make medical decisions without interference from partisan politicians.*

*The Transgender Athlete Ban currently being considered by the State Legislature is also harmful and only seeks to further divide our communities. Transgender and non-binary youth athletes play sports for the exact same reasons as other students their age: staying healthy, being part of a team, and fostering friendships – all lifelong benefits of playing a sport. When we tell transgender girls that they can't play girls' sports – or transgender boys that they can't play boys' sports – they miss out on this important childhood experience and all the lessons it teaches.*

*Like other students, some transgender and non-binary youth turn to sports as an affirming space. Preventing them from participating sends a dangerous message to all youth about not being welcome or wanted, and increases risks to their physical and emotional wellbeing. Major athletic associations such as the NCAA, the International Olympic Committee, and USA Gymnastics have instituted policies that allow transgender athletes to participate professionally. All our kids, regardless of their gender, deserve to be able to play on sports teams in Wisconsin. It's that simple.*

***If passed, these bills would cost lives.*** *They are nothing short of an attempt to eradicate the transgender community and roll back the gains that have been made in LGBTQ+ social acceptance and lived equality over the past several decades.*

*But even if they don't become law, the mere introduction and consideration of anti-LGBTQ+ measures such as these has been proven to have a direct, detrimental impact on the mental health of LGBTQ+ people – particularly our queer and trans youth. We need to do better.*

*We, the Wisconsin LGBTQ+ Policy Coalition, representing over fifty organizations and community leaders from across our state, condemn these harmful attempts to restrict bodily autonomy, demonize the transgender and non-binary community, and deny gender non-conforming youth life-saving medication, care, and community.*

*Our message to lawmakers is simple. **Stop playing games with the lives of transgender Wisconsinites.** Politicians have no business interfering with deeply personal medical decisions that should be made between individuals, their families, and their healthcare providers.*

*We will continue to fiercely oppose this legislation at every step, and we will never back down. We will always fight to protect the bodily autonomy, privacy, and freedom of LGBTQ+ Wisconsinites – including the freedom to play sports and decide what healthcare is appropriate for themselves.*

**Organizations:**

1. Fair Wisconsin
2. GSAFE
3. Diverse & Resilient
4. Human Rights Campaign
5. ACLU of Wisconsin
6. Black Leaders Organizing for Communities (BLOC)
7. Freedom, Inc.
8. OPEN-Out Professional Engagement Network
9. LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin
10. PFLAG Washburn Chequamegon Bay
11. PFLAG Madison
12. PFLAG Mount Horeb
13. PFLAG Door Count
14. OutReach LGBTQ+ Community Center
15. TRANCE Consulting

16. Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice
17. Wisconsin Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
18. Progress North
19. Voces De La Frontera
20. Open Door Pride
21. All in Wisconsin
22. A Better Wisconsin Together
23. Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin
24. The Center: 7 Rivers LGBTQ Connection
25. Trans Advocacy Madison
26. Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce
27. MN Transgender Alliance, NW Wisconsin Chapters
28. Wisconsin Education Association Council
29. Milwaukee LGBT Community Center
30. City of Milwaukee Equal Rights Commission
31. Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault
32. First Baptist Church of Madison
33. RCC Sexual Violence Resource Center
34. GLSEN Green Bay
35. Sunseeker MKE
36. Black Youth Project 100
37. Bay Area Trans Youth Alliance
38. TransParent Support Group NEW Pride Center
39. Unapologetically Proud
40. Chippewa Valley LGBTQ+ Community Center

**Community Leaders:**

- 1) Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway
- 2) Middleton Mayor Emily Kuhn
- 3) Rev. Tim Schaefer
- 4) Helen Boyd
- 5) Rachel Crowl
- 6) Dana Mosling, LPC, LMFT
- 7) Sandy Brown
- 8) Rabbi Bonnie Margulis

- 27) Sean O'Brien
- 28) Nick Famularo
- 29) Andrea Hughes
- 30) Jen Plants
- 31) Rev. Nancy Hanson, PFLAG Washburn
- 32) Mindy Frank
- 33) Mari Danz
- 34) Cody Sorlie Theis
- 35) Darlene Johns

- 9) Cathy Grier
- 10) Sarah Sarbacker
- 11) Jennifer DeGroff
- 12) Karen ODonnell
- 13) Randi Cartmill
- 14) Erina Oistad
- 15) Koi Oistad
- 16) Chad Oistad
- 17) Kathy Krasny
- 18) Jennifer Cook
- 19) Tara J Schnell
- 20) Jacob Dunphy
- 21) Michelle Dunphy
- 22) Carlie Craig
- 23) Claire Matejka
- 24) Lara Wells
- 25) Rebecca Greco
- 26) Kaylin Karn

- 36) Amy Lyle
- 37) Ashley Green
- 38) Amy Squitieri
- 39) Karen Kobelski
- 40) Janet Leino
- 41) Kristie Halverson
- 42) Lori Severson
- 43) Colleen Waydick
- 44) Andrea Kehrein Riley
- 45) Jamie McCarthy
- 46) Georgia Corner
- 47) Lily's Magical Treats
- 48) Coree Van Thiel
- 49) Amelia McConnell, PFLAG Madison
- 50) Jeanne Williams, PFLAG Madison
- 51) Karen Baker, PFLAG Madison
- 52) Angie Sparks

Dear Members of the Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed assembly bill 377 currently scheduled for this committee hearing. This bill raises serious concerns about the protection of the rights and well-being of transgender and non-binary individuals in Wisconsin.

This bill does not serve the interests of the people of Wisconsin. In fact, it represents a direct affront to our principles of fairness, equality, and individual freedom. Transgender athletes, like their cisgender counterparts, should have the opportunity to participate in sports. Evidence has shown that the advantages of transgender athletes over cisgender peers are minimal to non-existent. Banning them from participating is unjust, unfair, not rooted in science, and frankly not the business of the Wisconsin State Legislature to involve itself in.

Furthermore, this bill has the potential to isolate and stigmatize a vulnerable community. Instead of fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment, it promotes discrimination and prejudice, which is contrary to the values of our state. I urge you to consider the implications of this bill on the lives of transgender and non-binary youth and their families. Our state should be a place where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their gender identity. I implore you to reject this discriminatory bill and instead focus on legislation that promotes inclusivity, equality, and the well-being of all Wisconsinites.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Claire Johnson,

Osceola, WI, 54020

To Whom It May Concern:

I want to voice my opposition to Bills Bills 378, 377, and 465 introduced by the WI Assembly. Trans kids and collegiate athletes should have the right to participate in sports, and trans people should also have access to life-saving medical care. If these bills were to be passed into law, they would harm people I love and care for.

Sports can be an integral part of human development by promoting mental and physical health. It seems cruel to take athletic opportunities away from kids and college students.

These Bills do not represent the Wisconsin I know and love.

Thank you,

Sharon Holthaus  
Madison, WI 53716

Dear members of the Assembly Committee on AB 377 Athlete K-12 Ban

My name is Sunshine Jones, and I am a resident of Dane County. I've lived in Wisconsin for 45 years. I am a retired Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist who worked with LGBTQ youth and adults as part of my professional practice. I have been with my marriage partner for 46 years and am the grandmother of six. Four of our six grandchildren live in Wisconsin. I have been active in Christian faith communities throughout my life where a core teaching is inclusive love and compassionate care for all people.

In the past, I also was involved in community service work with LGBTQ youth for 12 years and have years of continuing educational training on working with LGBTQ youth and adults. Prior to the availability of training for professionals working with trans and non-binary youth or established services, in my LGBTQ youth community service work I sat in 3 different hospital rooms with young people who felt rejected by our world and tried to commit suicide. Thanks be to God and those who saw their goodness and affirmed who these young people knew themselves to be, they are each still here and thriving.

I am writing today to save the lives of trans and gender non-conforming youth who deserve a world where they can be safe, take part in the opportunities of all children and teens rather than be excluded, and have access to trained medical and health professionals that can support them and their parents in navigating their lives and making healthy responsible decisions for each individual situation.

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Assembly 377 Athlete K-12 Ban because if passed, this bill will cost lives. At a time when LGBTQ youth are already struggling with harassment and discrimination, we should be making it clear that they are safe and welcome in Wisconsin.

Sadly, it appears that there is a politically motivated agenda with this bill to discriminate and exclude when every major medical organization, including the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, agrees that gender-affirming care is safe, beneficial, and appropriate for transgender and gender non-conforming youth. Patients of all ages, alongside their families and doctors, should be able to make medical decisions without interference from politicians.

I don't believe politicians should interfere with personal, private medical decisions that should only be made between patients, their doctors and/or trained therapists, and their families.

Sincerely,

Sunshine Jones  
Madison, Dane County,  
53711



Dear Legislators,

I am a transgender college student going to UW-Milwaukee. A number of bills are up this week that will decide what my rights are within the state of Wisconsin. I am an adult who fully believes I should have the right to make my own healthcare choices and transition. I struggle with gender dysphoria and believe me when I say that that gender dysphoria is very real and it is not a choice. Medical research has shown the benefits of transgender healthcare. It shows that the majority of those who will undergo a medical transition in their lifetime will not regret it. Most importantly in a community with such a high suicide risk, it has been shown to reduce suicidal ideation for transgender individuals. Research done and published in the article, *Suicide-Related Outcomes Following Gender-Affirming Treatment: A Review*, puts it better than I ever could so I will use the words of its author,

“Hughto et al. (2020) utilized a cross-sectional, online survey of 288 US-based transgender adults via the Transgender Stress and Health Study. Bivariate and multivariable mixed-effect logistic regression analyses were used. Participants were asked if they ever had a history of suicide attempt(s) or thoughts of suicide as a dichotomous variable before gender-affirming treatment. Prior to initiating unspecified gender-affirming treatment(s), 73.3% of the sample reported a history of suicidal ideation; this percentage dropped to 43.4% following the initiation of gender-affirming treatment. Prior to treatment initiation, 35.8% of the sample reported a history of suicide attempt(s), and 9.4% reported a history of suicide attempt(s) after initiation of gender-affirming treatment”

No one is harmed by others having access to these life-saving treatments. Harm is only done when lawmakers make the choice to ban people from finally getting the treatment they need to finally feel at home in their bodies rather than imprisoned there. I am transgender, my friends are transgender and so are my mentors and elders. We will still be here no matter if you legalize our healthcare or ban us from playing sports. There will always be transgender citizens within our state of Wisconsin. All you would be doing is making our lives more painful and making it clear that our legislators would oppress the lives of those in the transgender community in order to appease those who wish us to not exist.

I implore you to defend the rights of transgender people within the state of Wisconsin. We should be allowed to be in sports. We should be allowed to make medical decisions about our own bodies which has been shown by medical research to benefit the vast majority of those who choose to go that route in their transition. Do not pass these bills that would rip away the rights of our transgender community.

Greetings,

I am writing to express my opposition to bill AB 377 banning transgender and non-binary students in public schools and all private schools from participating on sports teams that align with their gender identity sets a harmful precedent and creates a less rich experience for both trans and cis athletes.

Sophia Kennedy Schmit  
She/Her/Hers  
Madison, Wisconsin, USA

To members of the committee,

My name is Erik Franze, and I reside at 315 S. Hartwell Ave., in Waukesha. I write to you today to firmly oppose Assembly Bill 377, that would penalize, ostracize, and criminalize trans youth across Wisconsin's public school systems for simply existing and wishing to play sports. It has been scientifically proven that there is no advantage that trans people have in athletic competitions, and any information influencing the course of this bill to the contrary is rooted in faulty studies and hateful pseudo science. In a similar fashion to Assembly Bill 378, which I understand to be having a hearing simultaneously to this one, AB 377 targets a vulnerable population further and promotes myths of physical superiority, all the while ignoring what is really needed for trans people at colleges and universities around the state; policies that uplift and support. Instead of seeking to eliminate players from the game, I suggest the committee consider ways in which to provide more robust resources for mental and physical health. When children and youth are told they can't participate in something because of who they are, how do you think that makes them feel about themselves? Anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, and more are already much higher for trans youth in Wisconsin than for those who are not trans. This is not due to some deficiency or illness, but stems from societal stigma, shame, and discrimination fueled and promoted by bills exactly like this one! Trans people deserve to pursue athletic activities, not be excluded from them. Vote no on AB 377!

Sincerely,

Erik Franze

Dear AB 377 Committee members,

I have been with my spouse for the better part of 35 years. I have been teaching for 32 years. After a long day teaching yesterday, I was sleeping last night by 9:30 pm. This morning I received an urgent message from a family member that my beloved home state of Wisconsin is holding 3 separate hearings on anti LGBTQ+ legislation.

The degree of immorality and abuse of power in all these actions, on short notice, targeting a historically oppressed community devastates me. I am deeply embarrassed by your inhumane actions and utter disregard for LGBTQ+ people.

You are elected officials representing ALL of the people. I expect you to honor your oath and do so.

In a month schools nationwide are dedicated to teaching standing up against bullying, STAND UP against bullying against LGBTQ+ people. STAND UP against discriminating legislation and other members, citizens and funding who aim to cause harm to an extremely vulnerable community.

Statistically, we are 10% of the general population. In addition, as you already know, we are also more susceptible to violence, anxiety, depression, substance abuse and suicide. This is my family, my students and my community you have been waging silent war against. LGBTQ + people will continue to die by these actions you are taking.

STOP IT! YOU ARE KILLING US. STAND UP FOR US. STOP AB377 NOW and in turn STAND UP FOR US by proposing supporting care, systems, funding and strengthened legal protections.

B. Denise Christofferson, LGBTQ+  
Mom  
Auntie  
Cousin  
Daughter  
Friend  
Teacher  
WI resident  
US Citizen  
Human

My name is Rev. John Francis Maher, III. I am the Associate Rector for Grace Episcopal Church in Madison, 53704. I am pastor and priest for transgender individuals. I am called to protect the dignity and identity of all persons, including members of the transgender community. Transgender people are often the most vulnerable members of our society, and therefore need the deepest and broadest care.

Please oppose Assembly Bills AB 378/ AB 377/ AB 465. Thank you for your time and attention in this matter.

Hello,

I would like to state my formal opposition to the following bills:

Assembly Bill 378 (College trans athlete ban)

Assembly Bill 377 (K-12 trans athlete ban)

Assembly Bill 465 (Trans youth healthcare ban)

These bills are not based on science and sense, but fear and prejudice. Numerous peer reviewed studies have shown the life saving effects of trans health care, and issues of fairness in school athletics cannot be resolved with an overly broad, one size fits all blanket ban. If these bills become laws, all they will do is isolate and vilify a vulnerable community.

I beg you, please voice your strong opposition to these bills. I love Wisconsin, and I don't want it to become a place where children are scared to be themselves.

Sincerely,  
Jessamyn Pratt

I demand that Wisconsin politicians stop playing political games with the lives of trans youth. They deserve to live their lives freely. The trans community demands to be treated fairly like anybody else. I oppose the Medical Care Ban and Trans Athlete Ban.

Krista Eastman  
Madison, WI 53715

Dear Rep. Kitchens, and the Assembly Education Committee.

My name is Liz Kuchinka, I live at 1024 Grandview Blvd, Washburn, WI. I am writing in opposition to AB 377, which prohibits transgender female students (male at birth) from participating in girls or women's sports in Wisconsin Schools. It is my fear this bill is being introduced to garner votes in the upcoming election without thinking of the real consequences to real people. Sports should be a place for all students to gain lifelong skills without fear of not be included for some perceived threat. Transgender kids want to participate in sports to gain the same benefits as other kids and should be welcomed onto whatever team fits their gender identity. This bill will cause real harm to a group of very vulnerable students. Please do not vote to move it forward to the floor of the Assembly.

Sincerely,

Liz Kuchinka



To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Rachael Cera-Alinas. I live at 331 W. Wabash Ave. In Waukesha.

I am also a VERY proud mother and aunt to two transgender young adults; both of whom started their transition while adolescents.

Transgender adolescents are twice as likely to attempt, or commit suicide due to the stigma, rejection by family and friends, and bullying by classmates. All of those experiences (among others) irreparably traumatize those transgender youth. That trauma leads to the extreme decline in the mental health of those transgender youths. Now, you all are attempting to stigmatize and segregate and oppress them legally.

My son and nephew are amazing humans. They are kind, gentle, loving, outgoing, caring, giving people. But, that is today. The road they had to go down to reach this point was wrought with excruciating mental and physical anguish and pain, even though they had very accepting, loving, and supportive parents.

Imagine, if you're capable, being born without a nose. Just holes in the middle of your face. They function just fine. You're able to breath without any difficulties. You just don't have the nose that everyone has. Now, again, imagine, if that was your child, or grandchild. Wouldn't you do ANYTHING to help give your child a nose one way or another? Surgeries, detachable prosthetic noses, face masks. Anything to make you or your child or grandchild look and FEEL "normal"? The technology is there for you to have a nose. The medicine is there, but the government told you that you were not allowed to fix this birth defect? And doctors are mandated not to treat this birth defect in any way.

Imagine the mental trauma you, your child, or grandchild, would experience? Being stared at wherever you go. Being made fun of by classmates and strangers. You criticizing yourself. Crying every time you look in the mirror. Calling yourself horrible names. Becoming physically aggressive towards your own body because you hate yourself so much. The feelings of being out of control. Being angry that, even though you can afford to pay for a nose, doctors are forbidden from helping you, by the government. The knowledge that you have absolutely no body autonomy.

Oh, by the way, government also mandates that you are not allowed to participate in the swim team at any level. Even though your birth defect has ZERO affect on your ability to be the best swimmer the world has seen. You are legally not allowed, because of something you had no power or control over. It was just something you were born with. Sure, your parents love you with or without a nose. Sure, you would love your child, or grandchild without a nose. But the government has taken away your ability to help yourself or loved one. The government has taken away your rights to do to your body what you wish. The government has taken away your right to participate in the sport you love most. The government has taken away your bodily autonomy. The government controls your body; not you.

I have witnessed, first hand, the mental anguish that trans adolescents have had to endure. I have witnessed the absolute trauma my son went through every month when he would get his period. Fortunately, I was allowed to help my son. My sister was allowed to help her son. We were also witnesses to the incredible resurrection of our loving, kind, gentle children when they went through their transition. They were no longer depressed to the point of being non-functional. And my son stopped cutting himself because he hated his body so much. And the fear that I had that my son would not be able to handle the hatred and disgust he had towards his body and would kill himself, went away as well.

Do not take away the right of every parent to help their children. Do not take away the right of every transgender youth to match their brains to their bodies; to "fix" their birth defect. Let them live the life that every other non-trans person gets to enjoy. Play the sports they love, and enjoy the same bodily autonomy that you enjoy.

Thank you,  
Rachael C. Alinas

Dear Committee Members,

I write today to express my strong **opposition** to **AB377** (the Transgender Athlete Ban).

This bill purports to solve problems that don't exist and would in fact do grave harm to youth in Wisconsin.

The participation of trans girls in sports does not harm or disadvantage non-trans girls in any way. Transgender children vary in their ability to excel in sports, just as non-transgender children do. Efforts to exclude them perpetuate the myth that boys are somehow better at sports than girls., that girls are weaker, that girls are less.

Furthermore, at the college level, trans women athletes who meet NCAA standards have absolutely no physiological advantage over non-trans women athletes. There is absolutely no scientific basis to claim otherwise.

Transgender kids face discrimination and violence that can make it difficult for them to even stay in school. This bill would further that discrimination. According to the CDC, transgender youth are three times more more likely to attempt suicide than cis gendered youth. Three out of 10 trans kids have attempted to end their life at least once. This bill would further eliminate critical opportunities for inclusion and improved mental health. It would further stigmatize and endanger this already vulnerable population.

There is ample evidence that providing opportunities for youth to participate in sports improves their mental health, their academic achievement and their future aspirations. This bill would take that opportunity from hundreds of children across our state, providing no real benefit, and causing very real harm.

Please vote against AB 377 and any other efforts to ban trans kids from sports. Let kids play.

Sincerely,

Lisanne Nelson Brandon  
3018 N Interlaken Drive  
Oconomowoc WI 53066

From: **Melissa Kellor** <mkellor@tds.net>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 8:56 AM  
Subject: Don't ban trans athletes  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

If the state legislature is so concerned about fairness it should vote for a non-partisan district mapping committee instead of worrying about a non-issue like trans athletes. Stop trying to ban people from doing things and let people do the activities they've trained to do. Science shows trans athletes do not have any special advantages so let them be!

Missy Kellor  
Verona, Wisconsin

Sent from my iPhone

From: **Sami Zimmerman** <samizimmerman04@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 8:49 AM

Subject: Testimony against anti-trans bills

To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Hi, my name is Sami Zimmerman and I live in Blue Mounds, Dane County 53517. I am in strong opposition to bills AB-377 AB-378 and AB-465. To put it succinctly, when I was a kid, I remember praying that I wouldn't be gay or trans because it would be too difficult. This is a huge failure, or a careful design of our system. Now I pray for the blessing being trans is. I want our queer and trans youth to feel so much ease in their "interpretations of happiness" (thank you Lou Sullivan). I want them to play sports and feel good in their bodies and to get access to care. No youth should have to pray to not be themselves, just for the burdens our legislature bears on them. Trans is beautiful, so so beautiful and we all benefit from empowering and protecting trans lives.

Sent from my iPhone

From: **Peter Tarson** <PTarson@davidsononline.org>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 9:02 AM  
Subject: Testimony against bills AB465, AB377, and AB378  
To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Dear Assemblypeople,

I am Peter Tarson, a high school student and close friend to many families directly impacted by the bills AB465, AB377, and AB378, restricting gender transition care and requiring trans children to participate on the sports teams of their birth sex. I would like to beg Wisconsin to refrain from passing these lest it deny people so dear to me their humanity, belonging, and safety in public.

I understand that you wish to protect people by restricting transgender healthcare. But you are not protecting people, only an image of them, an image that causes them to squirm in falsehood. It frightens you to understand a child's nausea at a chest that is false for your internal God-woven beauty, to feel the needle bristle violation of facial hair, to feel a skirt that throws you behind waves of overwhelm. The feeling you feel when you imagine if you had transitioned is the feeling they feel every day they do not have trans healthcare.

I understand that the sports bills are meant to protect "*innocence of other sexes*," but this very construct pathologizes human bodies and promotes shame and division. Men fearing women does not protect women, not even cis women. It creates the suspicion and dehumanization that promote rape culture and make healthy relationships impossible. Women being segregated from people with male anatomy, not humanizing them by being on the same sports team, makes it impossible for women to expect to share space with those bodies. Learning to coexist across different bodies can later help young women be comfortable reigning cisgender men in from developing rapist attitudes through shared experience and common humanity. The principle of segregating socialization is what leads to the guys-only mentality of rape culture. No wall will ever protect us, only love and sharing. Even cisgender children must learn, nonsexually, to coexist with and celebrate other bodies, and being on sports teams where they affirm the gender of trans people around them builds that.

Banning transgender children from competing on sports teams they identify with is banning them from sports, with the implicit threat of the physical and psychological pain they would experience on a team where they are ever reminded of something excruciating to them, ill at the sight and comparison of the locker rooms. This is not a restriction, it is a barrier to a form of traditional community that bolsters mental health and connects us to one another.

Allowing children to reforge their bodies and team affiliations is allowing them to have voices, which can be frightening because we worry for them. But denying it will create endless pain. I am not transgender but I am a child myself and have suffered immensely when medical decisions were made against my will. I wept and squirmed as I was forced to ingest morphine for a broken arm, and later, when I was forced to tolerate a compulsive spiral without medication to forge my brain to my needs. This inspired me to study biology for several years intensely and have meaningful, beautiful conversations about it. This became my humanity, vulnerable and generative. To force a transgender person onto a sports team where they will feel false and ill in the locker rooms, or force them to pilot a painful body, is to deny them this very humanity. Do you choose to believe this, and to believe your own similar memories? Or do you choose to hide in the darkness of the room you were sent to to cry without love as punishment?

Whatever you choose, you are worthy. You deserve to revel in the repressed expressions, gyrations, and expansions of humanity alongside all people with care and tenderness.

To admit that transgender people deserve medical care and affirmation in sports is to accept God's offering, enumerated repeatedly throughout the scriptures, that we may share in the act of creation. We become close to Him by embracing our mental capacity to build and discover His love in the world. How else was it when St. Peter founded the Church in Rome and Antioch or Abraham traveled across Mesopotamia? How can we forget this? Will we not build our bodies, words, and minds as His temple by celebrating how they connect us to others and our inner truths? To ban transgender medical care is to force our children into a Miltonian Pandaemonium, where their bodies pressed into a mold of volcanic mercury that standardizes and regiments.

I urge you to release into your fear and into the community of thousands of trans people who are calling for humanity, not to be cast into the shadows and forced to squirm powerlessly. I urge you to sniff and cherish the blossom of bodily and social expression made by the decomposed remnants of our genetics, the petal layers of our minds and hearts, and the aromatic scents of a gift, a sharing with the universe. Trans healthcare gives trans youth the ability to remain youth, not hyper-aware of their sexual bodies by their overwhelming pain. Trans sport access is a renewal of the traditions of community in sports and in school that rural America has cherished for its children for centuries. The urban elitism that has cost Wisconsin so many jobs is not about tolerance, it is about withholding care economically and socially through set standards and shame. Trans healthcare and trans-welcoming sports amplify this community and renew the Rust Belt. The Republic of Front Porches will not be dead when all can sit on the porch.

This is vulnerable because it requires accepting that whatever you carry as a leaden weight in your chest could flower through scientific discovery and loving community, not just about gender but all things. As courageous leaders I urge you to embrace that tension. I am right there with you and will hold you.

I will always see the mental and vulnerable intertwined in you, as politicians, legal scholars, and the soft animals we all are. I will always love you, however you vote and whatever you do. But please allow my friends to be seen, create, and discover.

Take care,  
Peter Tarson

Dear Legislator,

I would like to state my formal opposition to the following bills:

Assembly Bill 378 (College trans athlete ban)  
Assembly Bill 377 (K-12 trans athlete ban)  
Assembly Bill 465 (Trans youth healthcare ban)

These bills are not based on science and sense, but fear and prejudice. Numerous peer reviewed studies have shown the life-saving effects of trans healthcare, and the minimal to non-existent advantages of trans athletes in competition with their cis peers. All these bills will do is isolate and vilify a vulnerable community.

As a former K-12 athlete through the vast majority of my primary school years, this legislation does nothing to 'preserve the integrity of the game' or 'protect the fans and athletes', it only perpetuates the same harms that our already vulnerable neighbors face on a daily basis. Trans youth already face the incredible challenges of social isolation and exclusion due to often bigoted views of others; we don't need to add the power of the state to this harm.

I beg you, please voice your strong opposition to these bills and help protect our trans neighbors and youth.

Sincerely,

**Matt Koz**

[Kozguy@gmail.com](mailto:Kozguy@gmail.com) | 715-571-1577



To the Committee on Education,

I'm a constituent from LaCrosse, WI, and the last year of government interference within the LGBTQ+ has been very scary. Please consider keeping the government out of individuals' rights for bodily autonomy. We're at a critical point in our history where our actions could change everything and with over 500+ anti-LGBTQ+ bills being brought to the floor this year, I ask that you seriously consider how many of those you're putting in harm's way by continuing to back fear-mongering, white Christian nationalist's agenda.

Healthcare is something that should be kept out of this arena. There is too much at stake and too many lives that you're endangering.

We don't have much time left. Please, if you do care for your brothers and sisters in this community, you will do the right thing.

Katie Bakalars  
2104 Travis Street  
LaCrosse, WI 54601

Dear colleagues, friends, legislators,

I am writing to offer a testimony in opposition to bills 377, 378, and 465.

These bills are harmful and discriminatory and exist for no reason other than to cause pain and hurt. There is no evidence that allowing trans kids to participate in sports is harmful to anyone. However, there are mountains of evidence that show that trans kids experience much higher rates of mental health crises. Participation in athletics is such an important way of building, confidence, social connections, and a healthy relationship with one's body. These are things that all kids, and perhaps, especially trans kids, need for healthy growth and development. To ban participation is to actively choose to hurt young people when they are most in need of support and affirmation.

I am also opposed to bill 465, which prohibits medical intervention for gender transition for people under 18. I am shocked and horrified that the legislature would choose to intervene in the lives and decisions of individual families in this way. How could members of the Wisconsin state assembly possibly know more about the best choices for a young person? Then they themselves and their families could? It is not the role of the assembly to make such decisions.

All three of these bills actively seek to do harm to young people. The role of the legislature should be to positively support the growth of individuals and communities in Wisconsin, not harm those same people. I strongly oppose all three of these bills.

Jessica Courtier  
3837 Dennett Dr  
Madison WI 53714

I am writing to state my strong opposition to AB 377.

I play roller derby in Madison, WI. I play seriously, practicing multiple times a week, traveling for tournaments, etc. Roller derby is one of the most trans inclusive sports in the world. I have leaguemates who are trans. I play against teams who have trans players. So my opinion is based on my lived experience.

Trans women belong in women's roller derby, and in women's sports in general. People belong in the sport that aligns with their gender.

This is ABSOLUTELY also true in children's sports. This is an appalling attempt of Republicans to demonstrate for their base that they will exclude anyone trans--never once does it consider the feelings or experiences of the actual trans kids who will be hurt by this. It's hateful and infuriating. Trans kids are at higher risk of suicide due to, in part, cruel and exclusionary bills like this one. The writers of this bill will have blood on their hands.

Elizabeth Holden  
Madison, WI

Dear Entire Committee,

My name is Ellen Sweeney. I'm 41 years old and I am a cis gender female. I grew up in Chippewa Falls, WI and now live in Oregon, WI (104 Elm Street, Oregon, WI 53575). Just to establish character: I played many sports growing up including soccer of which I was the captain of the varsity women's soccer team at Chi-Hi. I graduated college with honors with a BFA in Interior Design. I pay a lot in taxes and have an excellent credit score. When I'm not working my super cool job in interior design, I enjoy quilting, golfing, playing cards, cooking, and spending time with family and friends. Hopefully that establishes my character. My step-brother Andrew Cray passed away from cancer in 2014 at the age of 28. He was an incredible individual.... Humble, intelligent, gregarious, hilarious. .... High-School Valedictorian, did his undergrad at Northwestern, and Law School at University of Michigan.... then worked in Washington DC as a lawyer supporting Human Rights until his death in 2014. Look him up on Wikipedia to see all of the awesome work he did. Andy was transgender. Perhaps you know or have heard of Sarah McBride. She married my step-brother Andy and she is my sister-in-law. She is a member of the Delaware Senate (1st District of the Delaware State Senate). Sarah is currently running for Congress. How amazing would that be for Sarah McBride to be the first openly transgender member of Congress!

Not trying to brag, but I know a lot of transgender people ranging in age from grade school to people in their 70's. Every single transgender person I know are the most authentic human beings. They are "normal" people "just like us". Kids who want to play sports with their friends..... humans who need healthcare. Literally we are all just HUMAN. This legislation is misguided and is simply hateful and harmful discrimination. I'm curious to know if anyone supporting this legislation is related to someone who is transgender? Do they have any transgender friends? Have they even talked to someone who is transgender? The people pushing this legislation are not qualified on the topic and should not be making these decisions. This is not the way. If you are concerned about transgender individuals taking over in the sports world you are simply delusional. Banning 100% of a group of individuals from playing sports due to the small fraction of a percentage that there is the possibility of an advantage is crazy. Some individuals are born more athletically gifted than others. If you are concerned about individual physical advantage, then figure out another way to even the playing field (one suggestion: perhaps limit the circumference of their biceps?). Please let all the kids play all the sports. I oppose this Bill. Please Vote NO on the trans sports ban AB 377.

Thank you,  
Ellen Sweeney (she/her/hers)

Assembly Bill 465  
Haven Slater  
Kenosha, 53142

My name is Haven Slater. I am a resident in Kenosha, Wisconsin and I am writing to the entire committee to address recent anti-trans legislation attempting to be passed and the effects it will have upon trans youth. Assembly Bill 465 is a violation of bodily autonomy, self-agency and freedom and is a restriction on basic human rights. As a transgender man, I know personally the life saving effect that being able to medically transition and align with my gender identity has had upon my mental health, self-esteem and general well-being. Assembly Bill 465 and others such as Assembly Bill 377 and Assembly Bill 378 discriminate against trans youth and help to perpetuate harmful stigmas that isolate trans youth from their peers. Transgender youth will be trans regardless of whether they are allowed to begin the process of medically transitioning and preventing them from accessing gender affirming care increases the dangers that trans youth face instead of protecting them. Trans youth should not have to be worrying about legislation that will strip them of basic human rights and autonomy on top of other issues and anxieties that most youth face. These anti-trans legislation take away these youths' ability to live their authentic lives and experience the joy and liberation that all human beings deserve and should experience. I am asking that legislators not allow this bill to be passed in order to ensure that trans youth's well-being and mental health are protected in the state of Wisconsin. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Good morning committee members,

My name is Alyssa Stowe, I live at 151 E Wilson St, just two blocks away. I'm writing in opposition of the amendment to designate sports in public and private schools based on the sex of the participant.

I could say that there is no scientific or medical evidence to support the claims that transgender athletes have unfair advantages. I could say that there's a number of genetic reasons some athletes may have an advantage over other athletes that have nothing to do with genitals. I could say that subjecting children to the scrutiny of strange adults who desperately want to know what's in their pants is humiliating, traumatic, and perverted. I could scream until I'm red in the face that corresponding hormone levels are all it took to make trans girls an equal player in their gender group. But all of that is hardly the point. The only thing you need to know is They're Just Kids.

Trans kids just want to play the game they love with their friends. Trans kids want to feel accepted and supported. It is not that serious. Children will only think it's unfair if you tell them it is. If you tell them to all have fun, they're just going to have fun. You people are the only ones giving this any kind of stakes. Sure, in high school scholarships may be on the line, but that's where medical information about hormones comes in to assure your anxieties have no base in reality. There is no diabolical plan that trans kids have to infiltrate a sport by dressing and acting like the other gender just so they can be the best. You are giving them way too much credit. Trans children are far more likely to be the ones bullied than the other way around, and it's abhorrent that most of those bullies are adults. And it's really sad that your biggest goal in life is to keep kids from having fun. Seriously, who hurt you?

I am begging you, please find something better to do. You are spending way too much time thinking about children's genitals. It's weird, and it's none of your business.

Thank you for your time, please vote with whatever you have for a heart, or not at all, that works too. And consider therapy.

Alyssa Stowe

From: **Lisa Klimczak** <[lklimczak1001@gmail.com](mailto:lklimczak1001@gmail.com)>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 9:02 AM  
Subject: Opposition to Assembly Bill 377  
To: [testimony@fairwisconsin.com](mailto:testimony@fairwisconsin.com) <[testimony@fairwisconsin.com](mailto:testimony@fairwisconsin.com)>

To: Assembly Committee on Education

I am writing to voice my opposition to Assembly Bill 377. As the parent of a transgender, non-binary person, I can attest that the introduction of this bill is harmful to trans youth. We need to be lifting up our children and celebrating diversity. It takes a huge amount of courage for them to live authentically and to transition from the gender assigned at birth. The government has no place in making decisions about how they can live their lives, and whether or not they deserve to participate in sports.

I am a lifelong resident of Wisconsin and am disgusted to see the introduction of bills that threaten transgender youth's existence and identity.

Sincerely,

Lisa Klimczak  
[lklimczak1001@gmail.com](mailto:lklimczak1001@gmail.com)  
Shorewood, WI 53211

From: **Lisa Klimczak** <lklimczak1001@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 9:02 AM  
Subject: Opposition to Assembly Bill 377  
To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

To: Assembly Committee on Education

I am writing to voice my opposition to Assembly Bill 377. As the parent of a transgender, non-binary person, I can attest that the introduction of this bill is harmful to trans youth. We need to be lifting up our children and celebrating diversity. It takes a huge amount of courage for them to live authentically and to transition from the gender assigned at birth. The government has no place in making decisions about how they can live their lives, and whether or not they deserve to participate in sports.

I am a lifelong resident of Wisconsin and am disgusted to see the introduction of bills that threaten transgender youth's existence and identity.

Sincerely,

Lisa Klimczak  
[lklimczak1001@gmail.com](mailto:lklimczak1001@gmail.com)  
Shorewood, WI 53211



**Wyn Helming**  
**Regarding AB377**  
**October 4th, 2023**

My name is Wyn Helming and I am a concerned Wisconsin resident. I am providing written testimony against Assembly Bill 377 and all other anti-trans bills. This bill is another example of the rampant and increasing violence against not only trans youth, but all trans people.

~\*~

Transgender athletes are already moderated by the WIAA in Wisconsin schools. Pushing a ban such as this one displays your intent to eradicate transgender people from public life.

Bills like this one, as well as anti-trans rhetoric pushed by those who create and support these bills have increased the disdain and vitriol for trans people. These bills further push misconceptions that make life for all children so much harder.

Instead of devoting time to create bills that sow division in our country, focus on creating and keeping supportive child care in Wisconsin that YOUR PARTY is so earnestly destroying. Even better, actually include transgender and nonbinary people in the decision-making process of bills that would directly affect them. I implore those who are scared of transgender people to actually talk to us in good faith. Treat us like human beings, because we are.

Thank you to those who read this testimony with an open mind. Please vote against assembly bill 377.

My name is Kaitlyn Luther at 442 Selden St Columbus, WI 53925 and I oppose the bill AB377 the Trans Athlete Ban K-12. I feel that the government should not have any say on the matter of Trans Rights, let alone when it involves the exclusion of a whole demographic. The argument trying to be made has nothing to do with the supposed sports they are protecting and instead trying to minimize a suffering minority.

This would also hinder any hope for a unified community. Besides, we should be teaching our future generations inclusion, not exclusion.

Be the change,

-Kaitlyn

Daniel Atwater  
523 Grand Oak Trl #208  
Madison, WI 53714

Committee Members,

I am OPPOSED to AB 377. The proposed bill is unfair to young trans athletes and denies them the opportunity to learn and thrive in all the ways that team sports allows. I simply cannot understand that within a state that prides itself on athletics and all things sports-related, that we would place barriers in the way for trans youth to participate in such important activities. We should instead be focusing on ways to make sure they are included and can thrive.

Respectfully submitted,  
Daniel Atwater

It is infuriating to see Wisconsin legislators spend time on such bigoted and harmful bills, attacking people who exist outside a socially-constructed gender-binary. There is a crisis in our state around caring for our kids - underinvestment in the childcare sector, in education, in healthcare, in mental health. I cannot fathom the point in wasting time on legislation that deliberately harms some of our most vulnerable kids. This legislation aims to make them unsafe and feel unwelcome; it does active harm. It shows that Wisconsin is not safe for people like my brother, who was born and raised here but did not stay, in part because of legislation like this that intends to make it unsafe for him to exist here.

Spend your time on actual problems - like funding child care and paying educators what they are worth.

Erica J  
Madison

To the Committee on Education,

As a physician in Wisconsin, I am a strong supporter of promoting physical health by access to athletics and physical activity throughout life. Nowhere is this more relevant than for children and teens whose habits of activity are often formed early on. As a high school cross country runner, my experiences were essential to my health and social development - and transgender students have just as much right to participate in youth sports as every other kid. Banning them from participating in a sports team that is consistent with who they are is discriminatory, unfair, and will impact their lives and health for years to come. This bill must not be passed.

Sincerely,

Melanie Fritz, MD  
Madison, WI 53711

Plymouth Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
2401 Atwood Avenue Madison, WI 53704

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Rev. Leslie Schenk, Pastor  
Phone (608) 249-1537  
lschenk@pcucc.org

October 3, 2023

To: The Committee on Education of the Wisconsin State Assembly

As a person of faith I oppose bills AB377 and AB378 for I believe that Jesus calls us to love one another (Mark 12:28-34, Matthew 22:36-40, Luke 10:25-28), and to love someone means to affirm them and support them along their life's journey. Jesus did not command us to love some people, but rather to love and help one another, especially those oppressed or persecuted, which is the transgender community when such laws are proposed.

I note that rules of appearance in the Bible, such as in Deuteronomy 22:5, are often used by some as scriptural support for antitransgender rules, but I also note that these are the types of rules that Jesus criticized as being too focused on outward conformity rather than inward integrity grounded in the acceptance of God's love.

When we ban transgender and non-binary children and young adults from participating in school sports, we deny them the opportunities afforded to other students to learn leadership skills, teamwork, discipline, and cooperation toward a common goal, all skills that are important for community and good citizenship. When we ban transgender and non-binary children and young adults from participating in school sports, we create divisions among students, and we relegate some students to second-class status, thereby leading to further discrimination, and feelings of unworthiness of being treated with the same dignity and respect as their fellow students.

Using legislation to normalize stigmas put on LGBTQ+ youth leads to greater rates of depressing and suicide. According to the Trevor Project's 2020 National Youth Survey on LGBTQ mental health, 40 percent of LGBTQ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the previous 12 months, with more than half of transgender and nonbinary youth having considered it. These youth are under attack for their very nature, and it is leading to more and more suicides. Such government-imposed discrimination is immoral. Resulting persecution and ostracizing leads to harm and even death, and is therefore immoral.

In my faith tradition we see the differences among us as cherished gifts from a Creator whose whole creation is beautifully and wondrously diverse; we do not see differences as threatening or to be feared.

As a woman who was in high school when Title IX went into effect helping to usher in more equality of access to school sports for girls, I have questions about the impact of transgender individuals competing in women's sports, but this issue is one that should be discussed, studied, and an equitable resolution worked out in community, not legislated by the government.

God's grace is for all, and God intends wellness for all, and that includes social and emotional wellness, which can come in part from participating in school sports. Reject AB377 and AB378, for the sake of our youth and their families, and for the sake of our community.

Peace and blessings,

Rev. Leslie Schenk

From: **Sarah Shatz** <sarahaudreyshatz@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 7:41 AM  
Subject: AB37  
To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Dear Committee on Bill#AB37

Please do not support this bill. LGBTQ rights are human rights. We are humans. We would appreciate being treated as such.

Sarah Shatz  
1814 Sheridan Drive  
Madison, WI 53704





October 4, 2023

Dear Honored Members of the Wisconsin State Legislature:

PFLAG is a nonprofit which originated in 1972. A mom decided to march next to her kiddo with a sign that said, "I love my gay son." Since that time PFLAG has become a national organization. Its mission is to create a caring, just, and affirming world for LGBTQIA people and those who love them. We established PFLAG Cambridge in October of 2019 to further promote this mission at a local level through eastern Dane and western Jefferson counties. We write to you today as constituents and as PFLAG members.

The world does not treat our LGBTQIA loved ones fairly. The bills known as AB 378 (the college athlete ban), AB 377 (the K-12 athlete ban), and AB 465 (the medical care ban) are stark examples of how transgender people, who already face so many hardships, are treated unfairly based on their transgender identity. Allowing for this unfair discrimination creates further hardships for our loved ones. And for that reason we ask that you vote against these bills.

Discriminatory actions cause additional hardship for the people targeted. The harm this discrimination causes is quantifiable and unacceptable. GLSEN, the Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network, is an organization founded in 1990 which has been gathering data on the safety of LGBTQIA youth in school and their safety for over 20 years. According to their 2021 biannual survey (<https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/NSCS-2021-Full-Report.pdf>) 68.0% of LGBTQ+ students felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression characteristics—50.6% because of their sexual orientation, 43.2% because of their gender expression, and 40.3% because of their gender. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Transgender individuals are nearly four times as likely to experience a mental health condition. NAMI further states that forty percent of transgender adults have attempted suicide. (<https://www.nami.org/Your-Journey/Identity-and-Cultural-Dimensions/LGBTQ>).

Discriminatory actions have real world results. These bills communicate to every transgender person in Wisconsin that the people elected to protect us see them as less than whole, and not worth the same protection and respect as their peers. We strongly urge you to vote against the bills known as AB 378 (the college athlete ban), AB 377 (the K-12 athlete ban), and AB 465 (the medical care ban).

Sincerely,  
PFLAG Cambridge

Dear members of the Assembly Committee on Education  
(AB#377)

My name is Rev. Scott Marrese-Wheeler, and I am a resident of McFarland. I've lived in Wisconsin for 29 years. I am also a Presbyterian minister, serving with the people of Oakland Cambridge Presbyterian Church in Cambridge for the past 10 years. In addition, I have been an educator at the McFarland Middle and High School for the past 13 years. My spouse is a Moravian minister in Madison, serving at Common Grace Church on the east side. We have a son who is a senior at UW-Madison. He is in a relationship with a beautiful person. They are non-binary. We love them! Both our son and his partner were athletes in college.

As a pastor, an educator, a parent of an athlete who was on different athletic teams in both in high school and college, I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Assembly Bill #377.

As a Wisconsinite, a parent and a Christian pastor, I am opposed to this bill for the harm it does to God's own sacred image who our transgender children are created in just as each of us have been. In Genesis 1:26, the writer reminds us that God is non-binary when they write "And God said let "Us" make humankind in Our own image..." In terms we use today, God is gender fluid. Over the centuries, a Patriarchal society assigned God a sex as male. Those who have prayerful and faithfully studied the sacred texts of Scripture know that this assignment of a "gender" to God has lead to oppression, abuse and violence against those who would challenge this misinformed biblical view of Scripture. The passage of Assembly Bill would continue this oppressive and abusive view of God's own sacred image. As pastor and an

educator, I have had the honor of experiencing the sacred image of God in and through the students at Indian Mound Middle School and McFarland High School, as well as through the larger Church community. I find the proposed bill AB#377 to discriminate against our “male” athletes. This bill says “males” cannot play on female sports teams, but you are allowing “female” athletes to play on male athletic teams. I am guessing you know the push back you would get from parents of young women who play sports like football and high school wrestling. That is discriminatory and hurtful to our young people who are trans athletes.

As a congregation, we invited the Dr. Jennifer Winters and her spouse, Mike Winters along with their two daughters, Kate and Patricia, to church to learn about Transgender Children and faith. One of their daughter is a transgender child. Dr. Winters and Mike Winters love their daughters. Dr. Winters through her medical practice cares for transgender children and youth and their parents. Your bill would seek to abuse both their own child, and those she provides medical care for, while criminalizing her compassion care for those she serves as a physician.

As an educator, I have come to know a number of our students who are non-binary and transgender. I served as an ally and as a co-advisor of the Gay-Straight Alliance. Some of our students were involved in athletics. AB #377 would discriminate against these young people, barring them from even participating in recreational intramural or club sports. Assembly Bill #377 is a mean-spirited, cruel, and abusive bill towards God’s own sacred image in our children. It is not pro-life or pro-family. As Jesus said in Matthew 25, when you do it to the most vulnerable in our society, you did it to me.” It only contributes the destruction of life and the health and well-being of our youth and young adults.

If passed, this bill will continue to cost lives. At a time when LGBTQ+ youth are already struggling with harassment and discrimination, we should be making it clear that they are sacred human beings, reflecting God's own image. They should be made to be feel safe and welcome in Wisconsin and on sports teams.

As a faith leader, an educator and parent, I don't believe politicians should interfere with personal, private medical decisions that should only be made between patients, their doctors, and their families.

Again, in the name of God, and for the health of our children, I asked that you to vote NO on Assembly Bill #377. Let our youth play sports!

Sincerely,

Rev. Scott Marrese-Wheeler  
Pastor of Oakland Cambridge Presbyterian Church  
6401 Hidden Farm Road  
McFarland, Wisconsin 53558

To The Committee Members:

I attended a meeting last night to inform people about LGBTQ+ issues and I heard there have been over 500 bills like these entered in state legislatures around the country. What a waste of time when legislators should be writing bills to make sure our youth are *getting the health care they need*, regardless of their gender. Bills such as these amount to harassment of trans and gay youth and should not even make it to committee. Please honor the values of democracy and our Bill of Rights and stop this kind of discrimination. I urge you to vote against these bills.

Virginia Coburn  
2 Coburn Ln.  
Whitewater, WI 53190

To whom it may concern,

Banning trans athletes and banning medical care for transgender individuals is wrong. Transgender individuals are human beings with civil rights. They have the same rights to participate in activities and to access healthcare as anyone else. Singling out this small segment of the community to specifically deny them civil rights unconstitutional and unamerican. As a family physician, I care for transgender individuals. Gender affirming care saves lives and harms no one. Legislation like this does only harm and no good for our great state.

Sincerely,  
Madelaine Tully MD

Hello, my name is Ash. I am a very concerned U.S. citizen. I identify myself as non-binary and deaf. I am currently taking medications to treat Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS). One of them is a critical medication, in a birth control form, that prevents the worst types of cancers—ovarian cancer is one of them AND they do help with other symptoms. The primary reason I am sharing my testimony is because I am in this fight helping fight to protect the non-binary, intersex, and transgender individuals and their rights. Every day I deal with people making assumptions and judging my body assuming that I am transitioning. I ask people to please stop outing non-binary, intersex, transgender, and women who have Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) and judging them based on how they are perceived. I support bodily autonomy and the freedom to access healthcare.

I, Ash Radonski, oppose the AB 465, AB 378, and AB 377 bills. Thank you!

**TO: Assembly Committee on Education**

**FROM: Rev. Douglas Clement, United Methodist Pastor**

**DATE: October 2, 2023**

**RE: Assembly Bill 377 – designating athletic sports and teams operated or sponsored by public schools or private schools participating in a parental choice program based on the sex of the participants**

My name is Rev. Douglas Clement, my pronouns are he/him/his, and I am an ordained United Methodist pastor serving in the state of Wisconsin. I am writing in opposition to the proposed AB 377.

Growing up, I was taught that being a Christian and being an American meant embracing the wide diversity of thought, practice, and personhood that exists in our communities. I remember learning how Jesus told us we were to “love one another” (John 13:34) and how, as people living in the United States, we had the right to “live, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”. While there have certainly been times when we haven’t always lived up to these ideals, the act of striving for them (and of believing they should be for all people) were (as I understood it) fundamental to who we are.

As a United Methodist, I am part of a tradition and a movement that has fought throughout our history to make this a reality. Our own Social Principles call us to “work toward societies in which each person’s value is recognized, maintained, and strengthened” and to “deplore acts of hate or violence against groups or persons based on race, color, national origin, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, status, economic condition, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religious affiliation.” (§162, *The United Methodist Book of Discipline, 2016*). Which is why I feel compelled to speak out against these bills.

AB 377 seeks to amend statute 118.13, carving out from the broader “...no person may be denied admission to any public school or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, pupil services, recreational or other program or activity...” an exception to bar transgender students from participating according to their gender identity. By singling them out because they are transgender, this bill gives credence to the falsehood that they are somehow “dangerous” and “unsafe to be around”. It gives space for hateful rhetoric, for bullying behavior, and for discriminatory practice. In fact, it *requires it* (by prohibiting these individuals from participating in athletics and other extracurriculars according to their gender identity).

There are multiple instances, both in scripture and in the history of our nation, where we have witnessed the consequences of our failure to include and care for those on the margins. As the Apostle Paul observed in his letter to the churches in Corinth, we are all members of one body (i.e. community). “If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.” (1 Corinthians 12:26). Yet, rather than encouraging this kind of relationship and community-building, proposed AB 377 creates further division among young transgender folks and their peers (at a time when they are most in need of such relationships), and puts them at greater risk for lasting harm.

The truth is, our brothers, sisters, siblings who are transgender are made in the image of God, same as you or me. They deserve the same love, acceptance, and affirmation. They deserve the same chance to be able to share their skills, talents, and passions. And they deserve to participate with their peers *according to their gender identity*.

I ask you to give them the same opportunities that have been afforded to generations of young folks. Vote “no” on AB 377.



Regarding AB 377,

I am a Wisconsin resident and have been almost my entire life (a few months in Chicago and I came running back), and I am disappointed to see bill AB 377 introduced. It is based on prejudice and disrespect, inserts the government where it is not needed, and targets a vulnerable population to distract from real problems this state has. I am against it, and do not wish to see it move forward.

A ban on trans athletes in K-12 is unnecessarily harmful and not needed. For K-12, the WIAA exists in our state to handle issues like this, not a broad state ban without nuance. Sports are a wonderful part of childhood, and all should have the option to participate. Any concerns brought up with a student-athlete should be handled with care and significant consideration by the specific governing body, not a broad ban by our state government.

Please do not advance this bill. Don't let this wonderful state be stained by this hate-filled bill.

Thank you,  
Ben Helming  
he/him



Testimony Submissions &lt;testimony@fairwisconsin.com&gt;

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**Testimony in opposition to AB 377, AB 378, and AB 465**

1 message

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**Amy Washbush** <amy.hilgendorf@gmail.com>

Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 7:59 AM

To: testimony@fairwisconsin.com

Dear Assembly Committee,

I am writing to ask to firmly and vocally oppose AB 377, AB 378, and AB 465.

As the parent to a nonbinary child, it is heartbreaking to see these bills come forward. My child deserves to thrive as much as any other child. These bills make them feel as if they don't belong, as if they can't pursue the sports and activities that other children can, and that they can't trust our medical providers to care for them. There is nothing wrong with my child. They are who they are and they deserve the same as every other child, boy, girl, or however they identify.

As a lifelong female athlete, I can say with confidence that this call to ban trans girls and women from sports is ridiculous and only intended to do harm. I have been fortunate to count as teammates and opponents trans women, and I stand in strong support of their right to access the sports we all find empowering and enriching.

I and other Wisconsinites like me demand politicians stop playing political games with the lives of trans youth. They deserve to live their lives freely. The trans community demands to be treated fairly like anybody else.

We must stand up for the privacy, freedom, and bodily autonomy of LGBTQ+ Wisconsinites and keep politicians OUT of our healthcare. We support the freedom to access healthcare and oppose the Trans Medical Care Ban, which would deny life-saving care to trans youth.

Sincerely,

Amy Washbush  
107 Sutherland Court #226  
Madison, WI 53704



Testimony Submissions <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

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## AB 377

1 message

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Angela Shetler <angela.shetler@gmail.com>

Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 8:06 AM

To: "testimony@fairwisconsin.com" <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

To the Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my **opposition** to bill AB 377. This bill would harm trans and non-binary youth and infringe on rights to privacy, bodily autonomy, and the freedom to access healthcare.

Angela Shetler  
122 State St  
Oregon, WI 53575

10/4/23

Dear Assembly Committee on Education,

I'm writing asking you to protect the health and wellbeing of trans kids and vote no on bill 377. Please allow them to play on the sports teams that they identify with and protect their access to lifesaving medical care. Banning health care and criminalizing doctors is inhumane and barbaric. Banning children from athletics is cruel. These bills are extremely harmful to our LGBTQ+ communities. They are a blatant attempt to codify discrimination and perpetuate damaging, inaccurate, and deeply offensive stereotypes against the trans community. People deserve to freely be who they are without shame, exclusion, or taking away their bodily autonomy. There are all kinds of studies that clearly show the harmful and deadly impacts these types of laws have on people, especially children. We should be nurturing, loving, and affirming trans kids, their lives depend on that. These bills are the opposite of that and will do nothing but do nothing but threaten the lives and well being of children and families.

Please vote no on the bills to ban access to athletics, medical care, and criminalizing doctors.

Thank you for your service,

Lorrie Hurckes  
501 W South St  
Stoughton, Wi

From: **Sandra Johnson** <smjohnso@charter.net>

Date: Wed, Oct 4, 2023 at 8:22 AM

Subject: AB 377

To: <testimony@fairwisconsin.com>

Dear Committee members,

I am a concerned citizen who wants you and your elected colleagues to reject AB 377. This bill as written would ban transgender and non-binary students in all public schools and all private schools participating in the parental choice program from participating on sports teams that align with their gender identity. The Committee on Education should vote against this bill.

Research by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network indicates that legislation like this encourages an environment hostile to LGBTQ kids, a group already targeted by bullies and harassment. Let the kids play.

Legislation made at the expense of these students, that targets a small group while knowing the result will be harmful, is wrong.

Thank you,  
Sandra Johnson  
Fitchburg WI

Dear Members of the Wisconsin State Assembly,

I want to urge each of you to oppose AB 377, AB 378 and AB 465. No one in this legislature is the medical or mental health provider for all of the trans, non-binary or gender non-conforming (TNG) youth in Wisconsin. The medical consensus at this time is that supportive mental health services, social inclusion, inclusive athletics and gender-affirming medical care serve the best interests of TNG folks and have no ill effects on cisgender individuals. Therefore, the legislature of this great state should not mandate the harmful exclusion of TNG people from athletics nor should they restrict what medical care TNG people can access.

Sincerely,

Jolin Mitchel  
Madison, WI 53704

I stand against the anti-trans bills AB 378, AB 377, and 465.

Banning trans youth from sports is based on incorrect information and personal prejudices. Trans kids should be allowed the same opportunities as their peers to enjoy sports and have fun with their friends. Let kids play!

Banning gender affirming medical care for trans kids is harmful and misguided. Its authors say they are protecting children, but if enacted, this policy would cause significant harm to the kids they profess to care about. We need to let young people, their families, and their doctors make the appropriate health care choices for them, not legislators.

This onslaught of attacks on transgender youth feels like a deeply cynical attempt to manufacture controversy and fear, at the expense of the very young people these bills promise to "protect." Wisconsin Republicans need to stop picking on trans and non-binary kids, and get back to the business of governing!

With regards,

Catherine Watkins  
Madison, WI 53704

Dear members of the Assembly Committee on Education,

My name is Lori Severson. I am a lifelong Madison resident, and I am a mother of three. My middle child is Transgender and she is thankfully 19 years old so this bill would not affect her. But I this bill would affect my neighbors, my youngest daughter's softball teammate as one example of many, and the dynamics of our public schools, which informs our entire community.

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Assembly Bill 377. As a Wisconsinite, I am opposed to this bill because all children, all people should have equal access to sports. It is widely understood that participation in sports is key to youth development. Physical activity, teamwork, developing soft skills, building confidence - so much is learned and experienced through sports. When transgender youth are supported, they show significant increases in self-esteem and general health. Being a kid is hard enough. We don't need politicians making it even harder for kids who are transgender. Preventing transgender kids from participating with their peers in sports would legally ostracize them, denying them physical activity, social outlets and the ability to be a part of a team is discriminatory and teaches other children and society at large that bullying and harassment is ok, that separate but equal is ok, that hating others is ok. This is wrong. This is dangerous. And I urge you to vote no.

If passed, this bill will cost lives. At a time when LGBTQI youth are already struggling with harassment and discrimination, we should be making it clear that they are safe and welcome in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Lori Severson

Madison, WI 53711



Dear Committee on Education

My name is Melinda Knuth , I am the mother of a transgendered young person and have worked for over 20 years in the areas of crime and crime prevention .

I strongly oppose bill AB377

The reason for my opposition is the harm caused by such blanket prohibitions. Most children in our k-12 schools would not be impacted by the designations in this bill. They wouldn't even know there were changes or that anything was different.

Unfortunately for the students and families that will be impacted by this legislation, the harm caused will be devastating. Young people have so many challenges to face and all evidence indicates that connection to school, connection to a positive adult outside of a family , feelings of belonging , connection to peers - all of these connections are THE most important things to prevent violence - perpetration or victimization.

If a young person is unable to connect with their school community, possibly through athletics the harm could be irreparable . That young person is statically more likely to lose interest in school, engage in self harming behaviors .

This bill protects no one but has so much potential to cause harm.

I ask all of you to think about what you remember most about your school years and where you learned the most . Most likely it was on a team of some sort . This is where you were able to set goals for yourself, challenge yourself, win / lose, learn the importance of follow through and consistency and to feel like part of something bigger than yourselves. Sports teams are the best teachers for skills and qualities we need to be healthy connected adults.

The risk of taking away that opportunity from a young person is too great. The rewards of allowing young people to figure things out makes all the difference.

On a personal note - when I went to school I helped manage the boys wrestling team. I went to a very small high school with limited sports opportunities . I did not play basketball so what was I supposed to do over the winter to stay in shape for track . The wrestling coach was the girls track coach- so he allowed me to lead portions of the practices . I started to admire the physicality of the sport so I asked if I could participate in some small meets. I was provided that opportunity. I didn't continue on as a wrestler but I gained an appreciation for the sport, and recognition and respect from the team mates that I had been willing to try. It also provided those boy athletes a rare opportunity to compete with a female student on equal footing.

I oppose AB377

Thank you for your time

Melinda Knuth  
Madison WI 53716

Dear Committee on Education -

Please do NOT vote for Bill AB 377. This bill discriminates and should not be a part of Wisconsin's legacy. I do not want to live in a state that discriminates.

Thank you,

Marjorie Stoneman  
Whitewater, WI 53190

Hello,

Exclusion of transgender people in sports due to assumed advantages is rooted in sexism and lack scientific basis. We lack rigerous and significant data proving that there is any competitive advantage held by transgender athletes.

Additionally, exclusion of transgender people in sports encourages gender policing that causes bullying. According to the U.S. Trans Survey, 22 percent of trans women who were perceived as transgender in high school were harassed so badly they had to leave school because of it and an additional 10 percent were kicked out of school. Further excluding transgender people through sports bans only feeds into discrimination against them.

Thank you,  
Natalie Wieber

Dear members of the Assembly Committee, my name is Hannah Francis, and I live here in Madison, WI. I'm an avid elite age-group triathlete, trail runner, and former DIII collegiate swimmer. I have trained and competed with athletes across the gender spectrum, including trans athletes who I'm deeply grateful to call my friends and family. I have found so much joy in training and competing with these athletes, and they deserve a safe space in athletics. It would be a detriment to all sports to ban any athletes from playing or competing, and I urge you to oppose AB377 and vote no on the trans sports ban. Thank you for voting no to AB377 and keeping sports accessible and safe for all athletes. I look forward to seeing everyone at local triathlons next summer.

Best,

Hannah

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 4th, 2023

For more information: [info@fairwisconsin.com](mailto:info@fairwisconsin.com)

## **Wisconsin LGBTQ+ Policy Coalition Condemns the State Legislature's Transgender Medical Care Ban and Athlete Ban**

The Wisconsin LGBTQ+ Policy Coalition is a group of community organizations and local leaders dedicated to preventing the passage of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation in our state. The coalition advocates for pro-equality policies from the local to state level, from Eau Claire to Milwaukee, Beloit to Superior, and everywhere in between – to create a more just and inclusive Wisconsin for LGBTQ+ people.

Members of the LGBTQ+ Policy Coalition issued the following statement in response to the Transgender Medical Care Ban and the Transgender Athlete Ban introduced in the State Legislature:

*The so-called "Help Not Harm Act" does the exact opposite of what its name suggests. This cruel bill functions as a total ban on gender-affirming care in Wisconsin for minors, and would deny life-saving care to transgender and non-binary youth in our state. It will cost lives.*

*At its core, this is an extreme example of politicians once again inserting themselves into private healthcare decisions between doctors, patients, and their families. Politicians should not be interfering with personal medical decisions, let alone deciding the best course of action taken by parents and doctors to support the wellbeing of LGBTQ+ youth.*

*Every major medical organization, including the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, agrees that gender-affirming care is safe, beneficial, and appropriate for*

*transgender and gender non-conforming youth. Patients of all ages, alongside their families and doctors, should be able to make medical decisions without interference from partisan politicians.*

*The Transgender Athlete Ban currently being considered by the State Legislature is also harmful and only seeks to further divide our communities. Transgender and non-binary youth athletes play sports for the exact same reasons as other students their age: staying healthy, being part of a team, and fostering friendships – all lifelong benefits of playing a sport. When we tell transgender girls that they can't play girls' sports – or transgender boys that they can't play boys' sports – they miss out on this important childhood experience and all the lessons it teaches.*

*Like other students, some transgender and non-binary youth turn to sports as an affirming space. Preventing them from participating sends a dangerous message to all youth about not being welcome or wanted, and increases risks to their physical and emotional wellbeing. Major athletic associations such as the NCAA, the International Olympic Committee, and USA Gymnastics have instituted policies that allow transgender athletes to participate professionally. All our kids, regardless of their gender, deserve to be able to play on sports teams in Wisconsin. It's that simple.*

***If passed, these bills would cost lives.*** *They are nothing short of an attempt to eradicate the transgender community and roll back the gains that have been made in LGBTQ+ social acceptance and lived equality over the past several decades.*

*But even if they don't become law, the mere introduction and consideration of anti-LGBTQ+ measures such as these has been proven to have a direct, detrimental impact on the mental health of LGBTQ+ people – particularly our queer and trans youth. We need to do better.*

*We, the Wisconsin LGBTQ+ Policy Coalition, representing over fifty organizations and community leaders from across our state, condemn these harmful attempts to restrict bodily autonomy, demonize the transgender and non-binary community, and deny gender non-conforming youth life-saving medication, care, and community.*

*Our message to lawmakers is simple. **Stop playing games with the lives of transgender Wisconsinites.** Politicians have no business interfering with deeply personal medical decisions that should be made between individuals, their families, and their healthcare providers.*

*We will continue to fiercely oppose this legislation at every step, and we will never back down. We will always fight to protect the bodily autonomy, privacy, and freedom of LGBTQ+ Wisconsinites – including the freedom to play sports and decide what healthcare is appropriate for themselves.*

**Organizations:**

1. Fair Wisconsin
2. GSAFE
3. Diverse & Resilient
4. Human Rights Campaign
5. ACLU of Wisconsin
6. Black Leaders Organizing for Communities (BLOC)
7. Freedom, Inc.
8. OPEN-Out Professional Engagement Network
9. LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin
10. PFLAG Washburn Chequamegon Bay
11. PFLAG Madison
12. PFLAG Mount Horeb
13. PFLAG Door Count
14. OutReach LGBTQ+ Community Center
15. TRANCE Consulting

16. Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice
17. Wisconsin Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
18. Progress North
19. Voces De La Frontera
20. Open Door Pride
21. All in Wisconsin
22. A Better Wisconsin Together
23. Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin
24. The Center: 7 Rivers LGBTQ Connection
25. Trans Advocacy Madison
26. Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce
27. MN Transgender Alliance, NW Wisconsin Chapters
28. Wisconsin Education Association Council
29. Milwaukee LGBT Community Center
30. City of Milwaukee Equal Rights Commission
31. Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault
32. First Baptist Church of Madison
33. RCC Sexual Violence Resource Center
34. GLSEN Green Bay
35. Sunseeker MKE
36. Black Youth Project 100
37. Bay Area Trans Youth Alliance
38. TransParent Support Group NEW Pride Center
39. Unapologetically Proud
40. Chippewa Valley LGBTQ+ Community Center

**Community Leaders:**

- 1) Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway
- 2) Middleton Mayor Emily Kuhn
- 3) Rev. Tim Schaefer
- 4) Helen Boyd
- 5) Rachel Crowl
- 6) Dana Mosling, LPC, LMFT
- 7) Sandy Brown
- 8) Rabbi Bonnie Margulis

- 27) Sean O'Brien
- 28) Nick Famularo
- 29) Andrea Hughes
- 30) Jen Plants
- 31) Rev. Nancy Hanson, PFLAG Washburn
- 32) Mindy Frank
- 33) Mari Danz
- 34) Cody Sorlie Theis
- 35) Darlene Johns



- 9) Cathy Grier
- 10) Sarah Sarbacker
- 11) Jennifer DeGroff
- 12) Karen ODonnell
- 13) Randi Cartmill
- 14) Erina Oistad
- 15) Koi Oistad
- 16) Chad Oistad
- 17) Kathy Krasny
- 18) Jennifer Cook
- 19) Tara J Schnell
- 20) Jacob Dunphy
- 21) Michelle Dunphy
- 22) Carlie Craig
- 23) Claire Matejka
- 24) Lara Wells
- 25) Rebecca Greco
- 26) Kaylin Karn

- 36) Amy Lyle
- 37) Ashley Green
- 38) Amy Squitieri
- 39) Karen Kobelski
- 40) Janet Leino
- 41) Kristie Halverson
- 42) Lori Severson
- 43) Colleen Waydick
- 44) Andrea Kehrein Riley
- 45) Jamie McCarthy
- 46) Georgia Corner
- 47) Lily's Magical Treats
- 48) Coree Van Thiel
- 49) Amelia McConnell, PFLAG Madison
- 50) Jeanne Williams, PFLAG Madison
- 51) Karen Baker, PFLAG Madison
- 52) Angie Sparks

Dear Members of the Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed assembly bill 377 currently scheduled for this committee hearing. This bill raises serious concerns about the protection of the rights and well-being of transgender and non-binary individuals in Wisconsin.

This bill does not serve the interests of the people of Wisconsin. In fact, it represents a direct affront to our principles of fairness, equality, and individual freedom. Transgender athletes, like their cisgender counterparts, should have the opportunity to participate in sports. Evidence has shown that the advantages of transgender athletes over cisgender peers are minimal to non-existent. Banning them from participating is unjust, unfair, not rooted in science, and frankly not the business of the Wisconsin State Legislature to involve itself in.

Furthermore, this bill has the potential to isolate and stigmatize a vulnerable community. Instead of fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment, it promotes discrimination and prejudice, which is contrary to the values of our state. I urge you to consider the implications of this bill on the lives of transgender and non-binary youth and their families. Our state should be a place where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their gender identity. I implore you to reject this discriminatory bill and instead focus on legislation that promotes inclusivity, equality, and the well-being of all Wisconsinites.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Claire Johnson,

Osceola, WI, 54020

To Whom It May Concern:

I want to voice my opposition to Bills Bills 378, 377, and 465 introduced by the WI Assembly. Trans kids and collegiate athletes should have the right to participate in sports, and trans people should also have access to life-saving medical care. If these bills were to be passed into law, they would harm people I love and care for.

Sports can be an integral part of human development by promoting mental and physical health. It seems cruel to take athletic opportunities away from kids and college students.

These Bills do not represent the Wisconsin I know and love.

Thank you,

Sharon Holthaus  
Madison, WI 53716

Dear members of the Assembly Committee on AB 377 Athlete K-12 Ban

My name is Sunshine Jones, and I am a resident of Dane County. I've lived in Wisconsin for 45 years. I am a retired Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist who worked with LGBTQ youth and adults as part of my professional practice. I have been with my marriage partner for 46 years and am the grandmother of six. Four of our six grandchildren live in Wisconsin. I have been active in Christian faith communities throughout my life where a core teaching is inclusive love and compassionate care for all people.

In the past, I also was involved in community service work with LGBTQ youth for 12 years and have years of continuing educational training on working with LGBTQ youth and adults. Prior to the availability of training for professionals working with trans and non-binary youth or established services, in my LGBTQ youth community service work I sat in 3 different hospital rooms with young people who felt rejected by our world and tried to commit suicide. Thanks be to God and those who saw their goodness and affirmed who these young people knew themselves to be, they are each still here and thriving.

I am writing today to save the lives of trans and gender non-conforming youth who deserve a world where they can be safe, take part in the opportunities of all children and teens rather than be excluded, and have access to trained medical and health professionals that can support them and their parents in navigating their lives and making healthy responsible decisions for each individual situation.

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Assembly 377 Athlete K-12 Ban because if passed, this bill will cost lives. At a time when LGBTQ youth are already struggling with harassment and discrimination, we should be making it clear that they are safe and welcome in Wisconsin.

Sadly, it appears that there is a politically motivated agenda with this bill to discriminate and exclude when every major medical organization, including the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, agrees that gender-affirming care is safe, beneficial, and appropriate for transgender and gender non-conforming youth. Patients of all ages, alongside their families and doctors, should be able to make medical decisions without interference from politicians.

I don't believe politicians should interfere with personal, private medical decisions that should only be made between patients, their doctors and/or trained therapists, and their families.

Sincerely,

Sunshine Jones  
Madison, Dane County,  
53711

Dear Legislators,

I am a transgender college student going to UW-Milwaukee. A number of bills are up this week that will decide what my rights are within the state of Wisconsin. I am an adult who fully believes I should have the right to make my own healthcare choices and transition. I struggle with gender dysphoria and believe me when I say that that gender dysphoria is very real and it is not a choice. Medical research has shown the benefits of transgender healthcare. It shows that the majority of those who will undergo a medical transition in their lifetime will not regret it. Most importantly in a community with such a high suicide risk, it has been shown to reduce suicidal ideation for transgender individuals. Research done and published in the article, *Suicide-Related Outcomes Following Gender-Affirming Treatment: A Review*, puts it better than I ever could so I will use the words of its author,

“Hughto et al. (2020) utilized a cross-sectional, online survey of 288 US-based transgender adults via the Transgender Stress and Health Study. Bivariate and multivariable mixed-effect logistic regression analyses were used. Participants were asked if they ever had a history of suicide attempt(s) or thoughts of suicide as a dichotomous variable before gender-affirming treatment. Prior to initiating unspecified gender-affirming treatment(s), 73.3% of the sample reported a history of suicidal ideation; this percentage dropped to 43.4% following the initiation of gender-affirming treatment. Prior to treatment initiation, 35.8% of the sample reported a history of suicide attempt(s), and 9.4% reported a history of suicide attempt(s) after initiation of gender-affirming treatment”

No one is harmed by others having access to these life-saving treatments. Harm is only done when lawmakers make the choice to ban people from finally getting the treatment they need to finally feel at home in their bodies rather than imprisoned there. I am transgender, my friends are transgender and so are my mentors and elders. We will still be here no matter if you legalize our healthcare or ban us from playing sports. There will always be transgender citizens within our state of Wisconsin. All you would be doing is making our lives more painful and making it clear that our legislators would oppress the lives of those in the transgender community in order to appease those who wish us to not exist.

I implore you to defend the rights of transgender people within the state of Wisconsin. We should be allowed to be in sports. We should be allowed to make medical decisions about our own bodies which has been shown by medical research to benefit the vast majority of those who choose to go that route in their transition. Do not pass these bills that would rip away the rights of our transgender community.

Greetings,

I am writing to express my opposition to bill AB 377 banning transgender and non-binary students in public schools and all private schools from participating on sports teams that align with their gender identity sets a harmful precedent and creates a less rich experience for both trans and cis athletes.

Sophia Kennedy Schmit  
She/Her/Hers  
Madison, Wisconsin, USA

To members of the committee,

My name is Erik Franze, and I reside at 315 S. Hartwell Ave., in Waukesha. I write to you today to firmly oppose Assembly Bill 377, that would penalize, ostracize, and criminalize trans youth across Wisconsin's public school systems for simply existing and wishing to play sports. It has been scientifically proven that there is no advantage that trans people have in athletic competitions, and any information influencing the course of this bill to the contrary is rooted in faulty studies and hateful pseudo science. In a similar fashion to Assembly Bill 378, which I understand to be having a hearing simultaneously to this one, AB 377 targets a vulnerable population further and promotes myths of physical superiority, all the while ignoring what is really needed for trans people at colleges and universities around the state; policies that uplift and support. Instead of seeking to eliminate players from the game, I suggest the committee consider ways in which to provide more robust resources for mental and physical health. When children and youth are told they can't participate in something because of who they are, how do you think that makes them feel about themselves? Anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, and more are already much higher for trans youth in Wisconsin than for those who are not trans. This is not due to some deficiency or illness, but stems from societal stigma, shame, and discrimination fueled and promoted by bills exactly like this one! Trans people deserve to pursue athletic activities, not be excluded from them. Vote no on AB 377!

Sincerely,

Erik Franze

Dear AB 377 Committee members,

I have been with my spouse for the better part of 35 years. I have been teaching for 32 years. After a long day teaching yesterday, I was sleeping last night by 9:30 pm. This morning I received an urgent message from a family member that my beloved home state of Wisconsin is holding 3 separate hearings on anti LGBTQ+ legislation.

The degree of immorality and abuse of power in all these actions, on short notice, targeting a historically oppressed community devastates me. I am deeply embarrassed by your inhumane actions and utter disregard for LGBTQ+ people.

You are elected officials representing ALL of the people. I expect you to honor your oath and do so.

In a month schools nationwide are dedicated to teaching standing up against bullying, STAND UP against bullying against LGBTQ+ people. STAND UP against discriminating legislation and other members, citizens and funding who aim to cause harm to an extremely vulnerable community.

Statistically, we are 10% of the general population. In addition, as you already know, we are also more susceptible to violence, anxiety, depression, substance abuse and suicide. This is my family, my students and my community you have been waging silent war against. LGBTQ + people will continue to die by these actions you are taking.

STOP IT! YOU ARE KILLING US. STAND UP FOR US. STOP AB377 NOW and in turn STAND UP FOR US by proposing supporting care, systems, funding and strengthened legal protections.

B. Denise Christofferson, LGBTQ+  
Mom  
Auntie  
Cousin  
Daughter  
Friend  
Teacher  
WI resident  
US Citizen  
Human



My name is Rev. John Francis Maher, III. I am the Associate Rector for Grace Episcopal Church in Madison, 53704. I am pastor and priest for transgender individuals. I am called to protect the dignity and identity of all persons, including members of the transgender community. Transgender people are often the most vulnerable members of our society, and therefore need the deepest and broadest care.

Please oppose Assembly Bills AB 378/ AB 377/ AB 465. Thank you for your time and attention in this matter.

Hello,

I would like to state my formal opposition to the following bills:

Assembly Bill 378 (College trans athlete ban)

Assembly Bill 377 (K-12 trans athlete ban)

Assembly Bill 465 (Trans youth healthcare ban)

These bills are not based on science and sense, but fear and prejudice. Numerous peer reviewed studies have shown the life saving effects of trans health care, and issues of fairness in school athletics cannot be resolved with an overly broad, one size fits all blanket ban. If these bills become laws, all they will do is isolate and vilify a vulnerable community.

I beg you, please voice your strong opposition to these bills. I love Wisconsin, and I don't want it to become a place where children are scared to be themselves.

Sincerely,  
Jessamyn Pratt

To the members of the committee,

I am writing as a teacher and mom to voice my opposition to AB 377. All kids, including transgender and nonbinary youth, should be allowed to participate on sports teams which best align with their gender.

Now that I'm a teacher and parent, I see with new eyes how sports can be such a critical piece of a kid's life in the same ways. Kids want to play, they want to have fun with their friends, and they thrive on the feeling of accomplishment when they master a new skill or work together with their teammates to score a goal.

Please, do not legislate the exclusion of any child: Vote no on AB 377. Discrimination and exclusion have absolutely no place in our schools, on our courts, or on our fields. Trans kids, like kids of all genders, deserve access to play school sports. Trans boys are boys. Trans girls are girls. Non-binary kids are non-binary. Let them be kids, and let them play.

Sincerely,  
Kristen Scott  
Madison, WI 53711

October 4, 2023

9:00am - AB 378 - Committee on Colleges and Universities- Room 412 E. **(Trans Athlete Ban)**

10:00am - AB 377 - Committee on Education - Room 417 N. GAR **(Trans Athlete Ban)**

Re: In opposition of AB 378/377

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Reiko Ramos and I am a resident of Appleton, WI. I have over a decade of experience working with the LGBTQ community, most of which time has been dedicated to supporting queer and Trans youth. I currently serve as Statewide Director of LGBTQ Anti-Violence Programs at Diverse & Resilient. I am providing this written testimony in opposition to AB377/388 because of the harmful impact it will have on Trans youth.

In a nationwide survey of LGBTQ+ teens and young adults in late 2022, the Trevor Project found that 86% of transgender and nonbinary youth said anti-trans bills negatively impacted their mental health.

Our organization serves hundreds of LGBTQ+ people across the state of Wisconsin each year. When local elected officials at any level say harmful things about the Trans community or introduce legislation that will impact their rights, we see an increase in Trans people and their loved ones reaching out to us for support. We know through experience that the data is accurate: legislation like this has a serious negative impact on the mental health and wellbeing of Trans people in our state.

Transgender youth should get to play sports and have access to the same benefits of participation afforded to all youth, such as being part of a team where they feel like they belong, building relationships & camaraderie, and physical activity. These are all things that are linked to improved health and mental health outcomes regardless of age or gender identity, but are particularly relevant, as national data also tells us that acceptance and belonging are powerful protective factors for LGBTQ+ youth.

Please support the wellbeing of young Trans people across Wisconsin; do NOT move forward with AB377/378.

Respectfully,



Reiko Ramos  
400 N Richmond St, Suite F  
Appleton, WI 54911

Dear Committee on Education,

My name is John Siewert and I live at 1264 Deming Way in Madison, WI. I am opposed to bill AB 377. The sex listed on a child's birth certificate does not necessarily equate to their gender. Let children play sports. It does not matter what gender a child is. If they identify as something other than what is on their birth certificate, it is not the government's business to tell them what they can or cannot do on a school sports team. This bill should not become a law.

Thank you,

John Siewert

Dear Committee Members,

I write today to express my strong **opposition** to **AB377** (the Transgender Athlete Ban).

I have seen my representatives make the case that this and other anti-transgender bills will protect women and girls but in fact this undermines women's equality and would in fact do grave harm to youth in Wisconsin.

The participation of trans girls in sports does not harm or disadvantage non-trans girls. Transgender children vary in their ability to excel in sports, just as non-transgender children do.

There is ample evidence that providing opportunities for youth to participate in sports improves their mental health, their academic achievement and their future aspirations. This bill would take that opportunity from hundreds of children across our state, providing no real benefit, and causing very real harm.

Transgender kids already face discrimination and violence that can make it difficult for them to even stay in school. According to the CDC, transgender youth are three times more more likely to attempt suicide than cis gendered youth. Three out of 10 trans kids have attempted to end their life at least once. This bill would further eliminate critical opportunities for inclusion and improved mental health. It would further stigmatize and endanger this already vulnerable population.

Please vote against AB 377 and any other efforts to ban trans kids from sports. Our kids deserve the BEST for their present and their future and this is NOT IT. Do better.

Sincerely,

Kaja Nunez  
Helenville, WI 53137

Dear members of the Committee on Education,

My name is Staci Marrese-Wheeler, and I am a resident of McFarland. I've lived in Wisconsin for 51 years and have served as an ordained, Christian minister for 30 years.

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Assembly Bill #AB 377. As a Wisconsinite, I am opposed to this bill because it is discriminatory, dangerous and unwise policy.

Public schools in this country have consistently adapted their sports programs to be more inclusive and to allow student participation in sports activities that encourage physical/ psychological and mental health wellness, as well as community involvement. Sports are an opportunity to bring a diverse group of students together and teach them to work as a team. These are precisely the kind of programs that help bring students who feel marginalized into a group seeking similar goals and working together. We are beyond the times of discrimination in school sports. This bill is a step back to a less inclusive time in our history. That sets a troublesome precedent that could undo accessibility to sports for many students.

If passed, this bill will cost lives. At a time when LGBTQ+ youth are already struggling with harassment and discrimination, we should be making it clear that they are safe and welcome in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Staci Marrese-Wheeler,  
McFarland, WI 53558

Dear Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my immense opposition to AB377. Trans athletes do not have an unfair advantage against cis athletes of their same gender, and they deserve to be able to play the sports they want.

Thank you,

Samantha Bister  
Verona, WI 53593



Greetings Wisconsin State Assembly,

My name is Karen Polnitz and I am the proud mother of a gender expansive child. I do not know who they will become as they grow, but I do know that it is all of our duty to build a world that is loving towards and inclusive of the diverse identities of all of our children.

We know that trans and nonbinary youth experience increased levels of mental health challenges, especially when they are not supported. However, when their communities come together to show them that they are wholly loved, exactly as they are, for all of who they are, we know they can thrive.

What you decide here today sends a message to our children about belonging. Will you tell our children that they have a place here, that they belong in the sports and activities they love? Will you affirm their right to health care that meets all of their needs with scientific research, upholds bodily autonomy, and offers them life-saving medical care?

Or will you let fear and misinformation allow you to cast a vote of exclusion? Will you let bias send a message that they are not welcome as they are? Will your actions be the reason a child thinks this life is no longer worth living?

I hope you will vote on the side of love. On the side that will give our children the freedom and the care they need to thrive. May your decisions build a foundation of trust so that these same children can look up to you with respect for the ways you built belonging for them at this hour.

Please oppose Assembly Bills 377, 378, and 465.

In Community,

Karen Polnitz  
Madison, WI  
53704

Dear members of the Assembly Committee on Education,

My name is Marc de Kruijf, and I am a resident of Madison, WI. I have lived in Wisconsin for 17 years and intend for my family to continue to live here for many more years to come.

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Assembly Bill #377. As a Wisconsinite, I am opposed to this bill as the proud parent of a transgender 12 year old girl who thrives socially as a K-12 swimmer in our local community and would be deeply bereft without such opportunities.

If passed, this bill will do enormous harm to our youngest and most vulnerable constituents. At a time when LGBTQ+ youth are already struggling with harassment and discrimination, we should be making it clear that they are safe and welcome in Wisconsin.

In my view, it is well beyond the role of the state to dictate this level of rigidity over policy for children so young.

Sincerely,

Marc de Kruijf

Madison, 53711

To the Committee on Education

Transgender students have just as much right to participate in youth sports as every other child. Banning them from participating in a sport team that is consistent with who they are is discriminatory, unfair, and will impact their lives and health for years to come. This bill must not be passed.

Sincerely,

**Patrick Dooley, HTL(ASCP)CM QBRSCM**  
21 Park Crest Court, Madison, WI 53711

October 3, 2023

Melissa Tempel  
2638 N Fratney Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53212

Assembly District 16

Representative Kalan Haywood

I am resident of Assembly District 16 and your constituent. I am a teacher and I have 2 daughters. I want trans and nonbinary youth and their families to know that I stand with them. I love them. And I will always, always fight for them. I expect you to do the right thing and vote in opposition of AB 377, AB 378, and AB 465.

Thank you.

Melissa Tempel

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Melissa Tempel', with a large loop at the end of the line.

Dear members of the Assembly Committee on Education.

My name is Karen Kobelski, and I am a resident of the Town of Middleton, WI. I've lived in Wisconsin for 16 years and I am the General Manager of a healthcare software division of Wolters Kluwer, a company that employs over 100 people in Wisconsin.

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Assembly Bill # AB-377. As a Wisconsinite, I am opposed to this bill because my son is a transgender male (female to male) who was able to play on the boys JV2 tennis team at Middleton High School last year and that experience was transformative for him in a positive way. As a freshman, he entered high school without many male friends due to his transition and by participating on this team, he was able to form bonds with his male peers and relieve himself of the often crippling loneliness that can accompany a gender transition. He was the happiest I have ever seen him since he began his transition, and he was so sad when the season ended because he was losing that daily connection with his teammates. The fact that he is biologically a female did not negatively impact the team whatsoever. His win/loss record was 50/50 and he was invited to play in one of the special tournaments due to his performance. He has no aspirations to play on the girls team as he does not identify as female. In fact, if this bill passes, he will not play at all and this would deny him the chance to have this opportunity to create new friendships and share in a team experience. Life is challenging enough as a transgender teen, denying him the opportunity to play tennis on a team where he feels like he belongs is just cruel. He is not taking anyone's spot as this is a no-cut team. In fact, I would state that many of the people on the team did not even know he was transgender. Please don't deny my son and others like him this opportunity just because he is transgender. It is discriminatory and unnecessary. His participation harms no one and helps him.

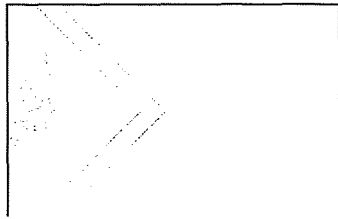
If passed, this bill will cost lives. At a time when LGBTQ+ youth are already struggling with harassment and discrimination, we should be making it clear that they are safe and welcome in Wisconsin. In fact, my son had a transgender friend who committed suicide at the age of 13, this is not a hypothetical for our family.

I don't believe politicians should ban children from playing sports just because they are transgender. The risk of being unfair to athletes who are not transgender is almost non-existent, but the risk to transgender athletes of not being allowed to play is real.

Sincerely,  
Karen Kobelski  
Town of Middleton, 53593

I am the parent of an elementary age cisgender daughter. I am an ally and believe all kids deserve to be happy. This ban is is plain cruel. All kids deserve to be part of a team if they choose to. There are also very few trans athletes in the first place. I strongly oppose this ban.

Molly Schuman



October 4, 2023

Esteemed Committee Members:

As co-leaders of the Grace Church Pride Committee, we are writing on behalf of the congregation of Grace Episcopal Church in Madison, Wisconsin. As an inclusive Faith Community, we oppose **Assembly Bill 378** College Athlete Ban, **Assembly Bill 377** K-12 Athlete Ban, and **Assembly Bill 465** Medical Care Ban. We also stand in opposition of **Senate Bill 480** - Medical Care Ban and **Senate Bill 479** - Criminalization of Doctors.

Members of the LGBTQ+ community have the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as any other members of society. This also includes our youth, under the guidance of their medical providers and parents/guardians. In particular, young people need nurturing and support as they grow in their authentic identities into the people they are meant to be. Education, not hateful legislation is the best way to inform those who are uncertain about how to engage with people who are different from themselves.

Governor Evers has already pledged to veto any bills limiting the rights of the LGBTQ+ community. However, we know his veto won't reduce the harm caused by this needless and cynical legislation. The Trevor Project's 2023 Youth Mental Health Survey found that nearly 1 in 3 LGBTQ+ young people said their mental health was poor "most of the time or always," due to anti-LGBTQ+ policies and legislation.

We believe that Christ calls us to embody an inclusive community of differing views and perspectives, united by our shared experience of Christ's love and our coming together as one body in the Eucharistic feast. By modeling that inclusion, we may be a witness of God's love and God's beloved community in our deeply divided culture.

Again, we ask you to oppose Assembly Bills 378, 377 and 465. Thank you for your time and consideration.

*Shelley & Olwen Hansen-Blake,*

Co-Leaders, Grace Church Pride Committee  
Grace Episcopal Church  
116 W. Washington Ave.  
Madison, WI 53703



Dear members of the Assembly Committee on Education,

My name is Jessie Chmell, and I am a resident of Madison. I've lived in Wisconsin for 20 years, am a parent of two children and a hospice social worker.

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Assembly Bill # AB 377. As a Wisconsinite, I am opposed to this bill because it is based on hate and exclusion. As the parent of a child who identifies as non-binary and is an athlete, I have seen the positive impact sports can have on a child's life. Sports teams have created a safe space with a welcoming community where my child is able to reap the many benefits of being in sports. Our youth need these positive opportunities to grow and flourish, especially at a time when teenage mental health needs continue to increase.

If passed, this bill will cost lives. At a time when LGBTQ+ youth are already struggling with harassment and discrimination, we should be making it clear that they are safe and welcome in Wisconsin.

There are real issues that we need your help tackling with gender parity in sports, including unequal funding, resources, pay equity, and more. Promoting baseless fears about trans athletes does nothing to address these fundamental problems. Excluding trans students from participating in sports teams consistent with their authentic gender identity is unfair and discriminatory. I believe school sports should be inclusive for all students.

Sincerely,  
Jessie Chmell



Dear members of the Assembly Committee on Education

My name is Christiam Joseph, and I am a resident of Madison of Dane County. I've lived in Wisconsin for 9 years and I work as a psychotherapist in this community, as well as have kids whom these bills can affect negatively

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Assembly Bill #AB 377 Trans Athlete Ban. As a Wisconsinite, I am opposed to this bill for various reasons, but I will speak as a professional and as a parent. As a professional I have had the pleasure of working with youth whom identify as other than their birth assigned gender. This alone poses a tremendous amount of stress on these individuals. The stress is compounded exponentially when those around them do not support them and is even worse when society as a whole ostracizes them for whom they are. The danger is grave for these young people as they internalize this hate and often times end up attempting or completing suicide. Legislature like these pose a grave danger to the lives of these individuals. As a parent I see the impact on my kids that a hateful and unsupportive society has. They often ask questions about rules and laws that are not inclusive and supportive and I cannot find ways to justify such a society that wants to inflict danger and pain on others. So the long term impact that bills like these has on my kids and the larger society as a whole is a perpetuation of negativity and seclusion and oppression and violence against others. And I cannot imagine that you want this to be the outcome if you agree with these bills so please reject this emphatically.

If passed, this bill will cost lives. At a time when LGBTQ+ youth are already struggling with harassment and discrimination, we should be making it clear that they are safe and welcome in Wisconsin.

I don't believe politicians should interfere with personal, private medical decisions that should only be made between patients, their doctors, and their families.

Sincerely,

Christiam Joseph

*Christiam Joseph*

Madison WI 53711

Aevi van der Stok

Regarding Assembly Bill 377

10/3/2023

My name is Aevi van der Stok and I am a trans-nonbinary research assistant in chemistry at UW Madison and while I am currently a Wisconsin resident, I previously lived in Texas up until a few years ago. While it was not the only reason, increasing hostility towards the transgender community and the passage of laws targeting us was a contributing factor to my decision to leave Texas. I am testifying against Assembly Bill 377, which seeks to prevent transgender youth from participating in K-12 athletic activities and competitions.

As a member of the trans community and former Texas resident I have seen firsthand the impacts of bills that restrict transgender youth's ability to participate in sports and social life and access life-saving gender affirming care. They do not protect youth, they serve only to harm and exclude them and open the door for even more harmful and radical anti-trans policies. They do not reflect current medical and scientific knowledge on transgender people and gender affirming care. No substantial evidence has been found to suggest that transgender athletes possess any significant advantage in sports. Transgender youth who are prevented from participating in sports with their peers, or who are forced to do so alongside their assigned sex at birth as opposed to their true gender, are left isolated from their peers or as a vulnerable target for bullying and discrimination. They feel as if they are being demonized for something they cannot control, and excluded from socializing and honing their skills alongside their peers. No one is protected by their exclusion; it only causes them distress and harm and denies them the opportunity to grow and play and care for their bodies through exercise. Such policies also have the potential to harm and exclude intersex youth whose bodies and hormone profile may not be easily categorizable as strictly "male" or "female". In addition, it also opens the door for undue scrutiny towards any child participating in sports, as any of them could be subjected to interrogation and ridicule if they are suspected or dishonestly accused of being transgender.

I felt the need to testify on this subject as I do not wish to see Wisconsin repeat the same harmful mistakes as the state where I used to reside, and I fear Wisconsin becoming as hostile to me and my community. Similar legislation in my home state and other states has served only to increase stigma against an already vulnerable marginalized community by targeting its most vulnerable members – youth. As minors, transgender youth do not have the ability to give testimony or defend themselves against bills targeting their existence. Therefore, I feel it is my responsibility as a transgender adult who has witnessed the fear such policies inflict upon them to speak up in their defense on their behalf.

This bill seeks to solve a problem that is not present, and in doing so would create new problems. There is simply no need to restrict transgender children's ability to participate in sports as themselves.

Thank you for taking my testimony under consideration.

Dear Committee on Education,

My name is Lindsey Kourafas, and I am currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Education Policy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Regrettably, I must draw your attention to a disconcerting matter at hand. Republicans within the State Legislature have orchestrated no less than THREE distinct committee hearings to convene on Wednesday, October 4th. These hearings are to deliberate upon the state's disconcerting anti-LGBTQ+ bills.

It is imperative to recognize that educational opportunity stands as a paramount determinant of health well-being within the United States. To contemplate the passage of legislation that inhibits the success and fulfillment of all Americans—particularly by means of prohibitive measures aimed at transgender athletes and medical care—would etch a deeply regrettable scar upon our nation's history. I strongly encourage you to take a resolute stance against these prohibitive measures. Transgender individuals residing in Wisconsin must be granted nothing less than the sanctity of their privacy, absolute bodily autonomy, and unimpeded access to essential healthcare.

Your conscientious attention to this matter is greatly appreciated, and I thank you for your consideration of these pressing concerns.

Sincerely  
Lindsey Kourafas

My name is Eli Rittenhouse, I use he/they pronouns, and as a transgender Wisconsinite, I urge you to oppose AB 377, AB 378, and AB 465.

AB 465 puts trans youth at risk. Research clearly shows that gender-affirming healthcare saves lives. Criminalizing providing healthcare for trans youth is inhumane, dehumanizing, and will put trans youth at immense risk. This is clear discrimination against trans people, which is unconstitutional. Trans people deserve equal rights and autonomy in healthcare. These are important decisions to be made between a medical provider, a parent or guardian, and a patient— we don't need lawmakers to chime in.

**Get the facts about gender-affirming care:**

- Every credible medical organization – representing over 1.3 million doctors in the United States – calls for age-appropriate gender-affirming care for transgender and non-binary people.
- Gender transition is a personal process that can include changing clothes, names, and hairstyles to fit a person's gender identity.
  - Some people take medication, and some do not; some adults have surgeries, and others do not. How someone transitions is their choice, to be made with their family and their doctor.
  - Therapists, parents and health care providers work together to determine which changes to make at a given time that are in the best interest of the child.
  - In most young children, this care can be entirely social. This means:
    - New name
    - New hairstyle
    - New clothing
    - None of this care is irreversible.

Please vote against AB 465 to protect all trans people in Wisconsin.

Next, I'll share my concerns around AB 377 and 378. This legislation sets a dangerous precedent in our public schools and attacks one of the most vulnerable groups in the state, namely, transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming youth. As has been shown by other states who have passed this dangerous model legislation, this bill also has consequences for the economy and tourism of the state as well.

Both AB 377 and AB 378 wrongly discriminate against transgender athletes in sports. These bills threaten to not only demonize and weaponize transness but also legally enforces the policing of athletes' bodies in sport.

According to an article by the American Center for Progress, surveys and research studies have shown that where transgender youth encounter accepting and affirming policies, including trans-affirming sports policies, their risk of poor mental health, addiction, victimization, and suicide is drastically reduced.

Let trans kids play, dream, learn, make friends, and live their lives to the fullest. This community is already under attack, and sports are a beautiful and fulfilling outlet that all human beings deserve to be able to enjoy.

Please vote against bills AB 377 and AB 378.

I urge you to do all you can to ensure all three of these bills do not progress any further!

Thank you,  
Eli Rittenhouse, 53546

Dear Committee on Education,

Do NOT let AB 377 pass. Protect the rights of our  
LGBTQ+ youth!

Elli Johnson, La Crosse

Dear Chair Kitchens, Vice Chair Dittrich, and members of the Assembly Committee on Education,

I am writing to ask you to please oppose any bills that discriminate against transgender people. This includes efforts to retract access to affirming healthcare, sports, and public facilities that match their gender identity. Discriminatory efforts like these are deeply harmful to already at-risk trans children.

Specifically, I write today in opposition to AB377.

As a mom, I work hard to model how we treat others with respect and how we greet differences with curiosity rather than judgment. As a public health professional, I understand that trans children are already disproportionately at-risk of depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation. As a community, we should be doing all we can to create spaces where trans children feel a sense of acceptance and belonging. As elected officials, it is your responsibility to protect these children. Instead, actions like AB377 perpetuate othering and model bullying. I urge you to vote against this legislation.

I will be watching closely to see what you do to protect trans rights, and I will cast future votes accordingly. Thank you for your time and support.

Sincerely,  
Karen Odegaard, MPH  
3614 Busse St  
Madison, WI 53714

Hello.

Please share my testimony with all committees.

I would like to state my formal opposition to the following bills:

Assembly Bill 378 (College trans athlete ban)

Assembly Bill 377 (K-12 trans athlete ban)

Assembly Bill 465 (Trans youth healthcare ban)

These bills are not based on science and sense, but fear and prejudice. Numerous peer reviewed studies have shown the life saving effects of trans health care, and the minimal to non-existent advantages of trans athletes in competition with their cis peers. All these bills will do is isolate and vilify a vulnerable community.

I beg you, please voice your strong opposition to these bills.

Sincerely,

Your Constituent,  
Carolyn Hammer

To the Members of the Committee on Education:

I'm writing to express my opposition to AB 377 and to any bill that would prohibit people from participating in sports consistent with their gender identity. As a high school teacher, I have seen firsthand how transgender youth can flourish when they are able to embrace their full identity, as well as the damage done when youth are shamed for being themselves. This bill violates the right to privacy and the right to bodily autonomy, it's damaging to youth mental health, and I urge you to oppose AB377.

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Brenda Morris  
Madison, WI



To Senator Knodl, Representative Kitchens (Chair), Representative Dittrich (Vice-Chair), Representative Binsfeld, Representative Duchow, Representative Mursau, Representative Nedweski, Representative Penterman, Representative Rozar, Representative Wichgers, Representative Wittke, Representative Shelton, Representative Considine, Representative Myers, Representative Andraca, Representative Hong, Bob Delaporte, Katie Bender-Olson

**Relating to** designating athletic sports and teams operated or sponsored by public schools or private schools participating in a parental choice program based on the sex of the participants:

I oppose this discriminatory, waste of time of a bill. First of all, it directs attention away from that which would be more beneficially spent elsewhere on issues that affect your constituents' daily livelihood such as cost of living, working class wages, transportation, housing, food insecurity, healthcare, access to education etc. According to nationwide surveys, 1% or less of our population identifies as transgender in the first place. While I'm not saying that this population isn't worthy of care and attention, perhaps legislative energy would be better directed to problems of the majority of our population, or at least alleviating the historic and systemic issues of oppressed peoples considered to be in the minority of our population rather than increasing said oppression.

Secondly, there are few studies indicating that a "biological advantage" even exists of "males" over "females" and such wording assumes females to be an inferior sex. Even of the studies thus far completed on this topic, very few indeed are conducted on students of the k-12 age range as they grow through puberty to adulthood, and any "advantages" to be had biologically speaking are negligible at best in our youth population. This is short-sighted, and lacks basis in actual science and reality. Actual examples of "biological advantages" have and continue to exist in the sports world, but we don't direct legislation towards them. Basketball players are not disparaged or excluded for being taller. There are many examples of "advantages" that are celebrated rather than used as exclusionary measures. All of this also denies the development of strategy and skill that our athletes train so hard for. What statement are we making of brains and brawn?

Finally, there are plenty of studies regarding the impacts to the mental health of students and athletes in relation to being excluded by peers and institutions on the basis of sex and sexual orientation. According to the Trevor Projects National Survey on LGBTQ+ mental health, more than half of transgender and non-binary youth have seriously considered suicide. 40% of respondents reported being physically harmed or threatened because of their orientation. These numbers are unacceptable, and we can absolutely do better for our youth.

Oppose this bill and direct your time and energy instead to measures that will actually help your constituents live meaningful lives. Thank you for your consideration.

—Alexa Priebe  
Madison, 53704

Dear legislators,

A number of bills are up for debate this week that would limit the rights of trans youth and adults and the people that care for them. I am a parent of two trans youth and have other friends and family who are trans, both in Wisconsin and beyond. Trans healthcare is a human right. I have witnessed firsthand the struggles of the young people in my life who currently don't feel like they are fully themselves. I've witnessed their struggles, depression, and heartache over making decisions about their lives. No one is harmed by trans sports participants, or by making hormones and surgeries available to people who need them. The distress from gender dysphoria is real, not imagined. This is a minority that deserves to be protected, not punished with limitations.

I urge you not to limit the freedom and help that trans people are entitled to. Trans youth are at risk for suicide and other negative outcomes in their lives when they cannot access gender affirming care. I believe everyone deserves a shot to live their best life, and that includes the trans community. Please do not pass these bills limiting our citizens' rights.

To the Committee on Education,

Transgender hysteria against CHILDREN in the Wisconsin legislature is gross and disturbing. This state has much more pressing business than passing regulations on checking a child's genitals to determine if they are playing on the "right" team. Like FUNDING education and childcare for instance. It is quite ridiculous that the state legislature feels compelled to waste our time and money on an issue that affects 1 percent of the population in order to single out, ridicule and exclude students from sports. Maybe we should just ban sports altogether? It's equally as ridiculous as your hysterics over transgender students. Learning to work together as a team, to uplift and support one another is a much more valuable lesson than the lesson of exclusion that you are attempting to teach.

Shame on you. You are the supposed adults.

Sincerely,  
Christine Morrissey  
1102 N Union St  
Appleton, WI 54911

Markia Silverman-Rodriguez

Regarding Wisconsin Legislature

October 3rd, 2023

My name is Markia Silverman-Rodriguez, and I am a concerned Wisconsin resident, voter, and taxpayer, and graduate student at UW-Madison. I am testifying to oppose Assembly Bill 377 (K-12 Athlete Ban).

Based on actions that other states have taken to take away trans people's rights, we know that this bill only serves as a stepping stone for banning trans healthcare altogether, which is in direct opposition to scientific literature and the most recent WPATH standards of care.

This bill is not based on science and sense, but fear and prejudice. Numerous peer reviewed studies have shown the life-saving effects of trans healthcare, and the minimal to non-existent advantages of trans athletes in competition with their cis peers. All this bill will do is isolate and vilify a vulnerable community.

Thank you for reading my testimony, and please oppose Assembly Bill 377.

Sincerely,

Markia Silverman-Rodriguez

(she/her)

Dear Committee on Education,

I am writing to vigorously oppose AB 377 K-12 Athlete Ban. There is nothing about this bill that is based in science, medicine or the welfare of students.

The very medical, educational and sports organizations to whom you should be deferring ALL support fairness in access to sports for all students, including trans students.

This bill is being considered for only one reason: stoking bigotry against LGBTQ people to further a toxic political agenda that intentionally harms young people.

Most sincerely,

David Gordon  
McFarland, WI 53558

Assembly Committee on Education

Dear Representative Kitchens and Committee Members:

I write to express my opposition to AB 377. I am a graduate of the University of Wisconsin Medical School with residency training in the UW Department of Pediatrics. Part of our training includes taking care of the whole child, including their mental health. This bill targets a very small but vulnerable group of Wisconsin citizens: transgender children. The definition in this bill: "sex means the sex determined at birth and reflected on the birth certificate", can become a means to undermine the mental health of fragile children. This bill puts parents, educators, physicians, mental health providers and even their coaches in the position of actually harming a child. Sports governing bodies are in the best position to examine these complex and uncommon situations and determine the best outcome for all.

Thank you for seeking public input and please reject taking further steps to bring this bill to a vote.

Sincerely,

Anne Schuette MD

410 Waldo Blvd.

Manitowoc WI 54220

Dear Committee on Education,

Please oppose AB 377 as these bills attacking our transgender community are beyond harmful. Our transgender youth and adults deserve better! What we know is that people are being harmed by the very introduction of these bills. The constant debate on one's very existence is demoralizing, exhausting and 100% preventable.

Let us instead turn our attention to creating safe + inclusive spaces for all people, all places.

Thank you,

Kim Simes  
Whitewater, WI 53190

Hello,

I would like to state my formal opposition to the following bill:

Assembly Bill 377 (K-12 trans athlete ban)

This bill is not based on science and sense, but fear and prejudice. Numerous peer reviewed studies have shown the life-saving effects of trans healthcare, and the minimal to non-existent advantages of trans athletes in competition with their cis peers. All this bill will do is isolate and vilify a vulnerable community.

I beg you, please voice your strong opposition to this bill.

Sincerely,  
Your Constituent,

**Shannon O'Donnell**  
*they/them*



Hello!

First and foremost, thank you for taking the time to consider this testimony regarding bills AB 378, AB 377, and AB 465.

As a former collegiate athlete at Lawrence University and transgender individual, I oppose the bills that are being presented today. They are purposefully targeted to discriminate against transgender youth in the state of Wisconsin. Transgender youth should have equal access to sport participation and gender affirming medical care as their cisgender peers. Transgender youth already experience high rates of violence, discrimination, and suicidality. Denying access to life-saving care as well as opportunities to participate amongst their peers will only serve to exacerbate the problems that these individuals face on a daily basis.

The rhetoric in these bills only serves to deny the unique identities of transgender youth that should be celebrated and supported by families, peers, school communities, and the state government. Trans youth exist, and preventing them from accessing sports and gender affirming care will ostracize and harm their livelihoods. There is already a clear amount of bigotry and violence that is enacted against the transgender community, and to enact it on a legislative level such as this will reinforce these violent and harmful ideas.

These youth already have the hard task of understanding and pursuing their true identities in the face of discrimination, and these bills deny them the opportunity to seek belonging with their peers through sports as well as affirming care that seeks to help them understand who they are.

I ask that the individuals voting on this committee today take the time to appreciate experiences other than their own and allow transgender youths to participate in activities that affirm their truest selves.

Thank you,  
Jo Berg (she/they)  
Mukwonago, WI