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I am writing today as a parent, a former high school and Division 1 cross country and track athlete, and someone deeply concerned with protecting the integrity of female sports in our state.

Over the last several years I have watched in dismay (often in person) as male athletes dominated girls' cross country, track and field, and cross country skiing at the high school level. While I fully support and encourage every student to participate in sport, it must be done fairly and with respect for opportunities that women for so many years lacked in sports.

A common argument that I often hear for allowing boys to compete in girls sports is that "there are so few that it really doesn't matter". I would argue that even one girl being displaced from an opportunity to experience the joy of crossing a finish line first, standing on a podium, holding a school, meet or state record, being selected to move on to a regional competition, or making an all star team is one too many. This is already happening in our state and I have seen its effects first hand. One need only look at the last several cross country seasons, the current outdoor track season, or the last indoor track and field season to find clear examples.

Another argument that I also hear is "girls should just train harder". Anyone that has competed in any physical activity knows this to be a ridiculous and insulting statement. Each year there are numerous boys at the high school level in track that log times that are faster than the fastest women at the Olympic level. For example in 2016 if we lined up the fastest US high school boys against the fastest women in the world in the 100 meter dash, the women would not even qualify for the finals.

<https://boysvswomen.com/#/>

The clear and indisputable biological advantages that males have over women is the reason we created separate categories for men and women in sport in the first place. If we allow boys to compete in girls sports we may as well not have separate categories.

The last argument that I often hear is that the Maine state law mandates that we allow boys to choose to compete against girls. I would argue that there is nothing in the Maine law that mandates this. It simply states that one may not discriminate. There is nothing discriminatory about having biological boys compete against other biological boys. It is a false argument to present that there is no other way. It is also false to assume that anyone opposed to allowing these boys to compete against girls doesn't want them to compete.

As someone who has gained tremendous benefit for sports throughout my life I want every child to experience those same benefits. It cannot, however, come at the expense of the women that have every right to a fair and safe playing field.

Thank you