

Lauren Knebel  
Cape Elizabeth  
LD 233

Good day, Honorable Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Judiciary Committee.

I am a constituent of Senator Carney. I submit this testimony in support of LD 233. (As a side note, I also support LDs 868, 1002, 1134, and 1704.)

Title IX was created to protect and give equal opportunity to women in education as well as athletics. I am focusing on the athletics aspect in this writing.

Research published in 2021 by A&E, shows that in 1972 before Title IX was signed into federal law, just over 300,000 girls and women were enrolled in high school and college sports across the United States. Female sports received 2% of college athletic budgets and athletic scholarships for women were virtually nonexistent. Fast forward to the 2023/2024 academic year, where according to Statista, the number of girls participating in high school sports alone had risen to 3.42 million. I was not able to track down college participation for that year.

This increase is thanks in large part to Title IX being upheld for its original intent: to ensure an equal playing field for biological girls and women. When we allow biological males to participate in girl's/women's sports, the field is no longer equal. Irrefutable science tells us males who have gone through puberty have undeniable physical advantages over biological females, including greater muscle mass, longer limbs, increased lung capacity, greater bone density and greater cardiovascular capacity. As we've seen several times just during this year's winter/spring sports in Maine, biological males have won places, titles and championships over biological females in women's sports. We see it happening all over the country, and we also see the injuries to females as a result of unfair competition, and females disqualified if they refuse competition against a bio male. There is no winning choice here for females.

This is not about the rights of transgender athletes to compete. This is about maintaining the legally established rights of biological females in their sports and spaces. All students deserve to participate and excel in athletics. We must focus on the intent of Title IX: EQUALITY. Men and women of all ages, races and backgrounds have worked tirelessly for decades to bring fairness and equality to biological women. Our girls and women deserve safe and fair physical competition. Think of your daughters, nieces and granddaughters and what you want for them. Think of them being unfairly jipped out of what many train for during their school years. Accomplishment. Athletic college scholarships. The feeling that their years of efforts and accomplishments are being recognized and rewarded. Think of them being injured, as we've seen several times, with their nose broken or a traumatic brain injury, harms that have happened as a result of current policy. They also deserve privacy in female-dedicated spaces like changing rooms, showers and locker rooms.

A March 2025 poll from the University of New Hampshire surveyed about 1,000 Mainers and found that 64% of those surveyed did NOT support transgender athletes in women's sports, and 29% of those surveyed did agree. Passage of this bill, and/or amending the Maine Human Rights Act to restrict athletics and changing rooms by biological sex, is in line with what the majority of Mainers want. Will the elected representatives listen?

I respectfully ask that the committee vote ought to pass on LD233 to support women's rights and keep fairness in athletics. Thank you for listening.