

Reina Anderson
Freeport
LD 2239

For decades, policies inspired by laws like Title IX have ensured that female athletes have equal access to athletic participation, scholarships, and competition. These protections were established in recognition of fundamental, biological differences between males and females—differences that directly impact athletic performance. On average, males possess significant advantages in muscle mass, bone density, cardiovascular capacity, speed, and power. These differences are not eliminated by training, and in many cases are not fully mitigated by hormone therapy. This is not a matter of opinion—it is a matter of widely accepted scientific understanding. When policies allow biological males to compete in female categories, the result is a loss of fair competition. Female athletes can lose roster spots, playing time, podium finishes, and scholarship opportunities. In some cases, they are forced to compete against athletes with inherent physical advantages, undermining the very purpose of having separate divisions.

There are also legitimate safety concerns, particularly in contact and collision sports, where disparities in size and strength can increase the risk of injury to female athletes. Let me be clear: this issue is not about denying anyone dignity or respect. Every individual deserves to be treated with respect, and all students should have access to the benefits of sports participation. However, inclusion cannot come at the expense of fairness, safety, and equal opportunity for women and girls.

Public policy requires us to weigh competing interests carefully. In this case, preserving the integrity of female athletics must remain a priority. If we fail to uphold sex-based categories, we risk eroding decades of progress and diminishing opportunities for future generations of female athletes.

I urge this body to adopt clear, consistent policies that maintain eligibility for girls' and women's sports based on biological sex, while also encouraging alternative solutions that allow all students to participate in athletics in a way that is both respectful and fair.