

Testimony of Cassidy Carlisle

Presque Isle High School Senior

Hello, my name is Cassidy Carlisle, and I'm a senior at Presque Isle High School. I'm here today because I believe every woman deserves the right to compete and thrive in a fair, respectful environment—one that honors both our physical differences and our God-given dignity.

My story begins back in 7th grade, when I was just 13 years old. I remember walking into the girls' locker room before gym class like I had done so many times before—but this time was different. There was a biological male in the locker room. I froze. I didn't know what to say or how to react, but I knew something felt wrong. When I voiced my concerns to school administrators, I was told I could use the individual bathroom if I was uncomfortable, but doing so could make me late to class. At just 13 years old, I was forced to choose between my privacy and my education. No young girl should be placed in that kind of situation.

Fast forward to high school—Nordic skiing had become one of my greatest passions. Before the season began my junior year, my dad told me that I'd be racing against a biological male. At the time, I didn't fully believe him. It sounded like something that only happened in headlines—something distant, not real. But I quickly learned it was very real when I showed up to compete and saw it for myself.

Throughout my junior year, I raced against this athlete multiple times—and I lost, over and over again. I was doing everything right: training early mornings, making sacrifices, pushing myself harder every week. But no amount of hard work could change the biological reality I was up against.

Despite the setbacks, I earned a place on the Maine Nordic ski team and qualified to compete at Eastern High Schools in New Hampshire—a huge honor. The races were intense, but one moment I'll never forget was during a climb up a long hill. I was fighting to stay ahead, giving everything I had, when I saw a Maine uniform pass me. It was the same male athlete. My heart sank. It was an instant feeling of defeat—not because I didn't give my all, but because I was competing against someone with an undeniable physical advantage. I returned for my senior year, hopeful that things might be different. But they weren't.

Women's sports have defined so much of who I am. I've been a varsity athlete in soccer, Nordic ski, and track and field. I've dedicated years of my life to training and competition, and I love mentoring younger girls who share the same passion. But it's becoming harder to encourage them when I can't promise that their effort will be enough in a system that no longer guarantees fairness.

This issue is not about exclusion or hate—it's about preserving fairness, safety, and dignity for every female athlete. I believe that God created each of us uniquely and purposefully. In His design, women are meant to flourish in the spaces He has given them. Let's honor that design by ensuring girls have the right to compete on a level playing field.

Thank you for your time