

My name is Zoe Hutchins, I'm a senior athlete from Fairfield, Maine, and I compete in soccer and track.

Last year at the Maine state championships, my teammate found out that she would have to compete against a biological male. Before the meet she was ready and excited to see how far she could climb in the rankings, but when she realized that she'd be competing with a male, her head immediately dropped and she looked defeated. She recognized that despite her years of hard work to get to this point, she was no longer competing on an even playing field.

And she was not alone. Every girl competing knew that their years of training no longer mattered— and it was now a battle for second place. And sure enough, we all watched watched as this male swept the female category, taking the state title away from a girl.

Not only did his victory directly affect the girls in this event, it also directly affected every single female athlete in the meet. Because he won, his team was able to win the meet by **one** point. It is an incredible honor to win a state championship and he should never have been allowed to take that honor away from girls.

This is when I realized that if we don't stop this injustice now, it's only a matter of time before males take over women's sports. The story is the same for so many female athletes; we spend a huge portion of our lives dedicated to our training, seeking the highest levels of achievement, only for it to made meaningless when we allow males to compete in girls' sports.

It is the responsibility of our elected officials to protect **every** young person and athlete in our country and do what's best for them. Allowing boys to compete in girls' sports is a failure of that duty. It is not promoting fairness or equality—it is actively harming girls.

Don't get me wrong—every athlete should have the opportunity to compete. But it has to be through the right avenues. Transgender athletes can compete in the category of their biological sex, or on co-ed teams. There are plenty of opportunities for competition that won't harm girls and we need to encourage those routes instead of allowing males to replace females on the podium.

Seeing the events of last week take place, I became very angry and frustrated, along with the majority of Mainers and Americans. I knew I couldn't stay silent and watch while any more of my fellow female athletes are wrongfully beaten by males.

We must push back against the demands of the woke minority, and enact laws that reflect the will of the people—The belief that men do not belong in women's sports. **Period.**

Thank you for your time, please vote in favor of LD 2239