



January 24, 2025

Dear Senator,

As chairmen of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, and Committee on Catholic Education, we write in support of the Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2025 ([H.R. 28](#) and [S. 9](#)). On January 14, 2025, the House of Representatives passed this legislation, and we urge the Senate to consider and pass the Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2025 so it may become law.

Consistent with the USCCB's support for this legislation in the [117<sup>th</sup>](#) and [118<sup>th</sup>](#) Congresses and the Church's clear teaching on the equality of men and women, we reaffirm that, in education and in sports, we must seek to avoid any policies that undermine human dignity, including denial of a person's body, which is genetically and biologically female or male, or unequal treatment between women and men. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 was a needed landmark to establish equal educational opportunities for women and girls. The Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2025 would help ensure the continued viability of Title IX.

Equal treatment between women and men has particular relevance in athletics, where male competition in activities designated for women and girls can be both unfair and, especially in contact or interactive sports, unsafe. Such challenges will become increasingly common as the number of persons experiencing gender identity discordance rises steeply, especially among adolescents.<sup>1</sup> In general, males possess distinct physical differences, and therefore advantages, in a number of sports, and this is already playing out in athletic events worldwide.<sup>2</sup> Their stature can pose physical safety risks in high-contact or aggressive interactive sports. Neither of these concerns is remediated by cross-sex hormone procedures which are required by some athletic associations for participation in sports of the opposite sex, as they do not fully address disparities in average muscle mass, bone characteristics, and lung capacity once puberty is under way (which is typically the case for student athletes).<sup>3</sup> Further, the safety of the students who undergo hormone treatments themselves is a significant risk when such procedures, with unproven long-term results in developing bodies, are the recommended means to participate in the sport they love.<sup>4</sup>

The Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2025 would begin to address these issues by ensuring that women's and girl's opportunities in athletics are protected. We are encouraged that this legislation passed through the House of Representatives, and we urge swift consideration and passage in the Senate.

Sincerely,



Most Rev. Robert E. Barron  
Bishop of Winona-Rochester  
Chairman, Committee on Laity, Marriage  
Family Life and Youth



Most Rev. David M. O'Connell, C.M.  
Bishop of Trenton  
Chairman, Committee on Catholic  
Education

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<sup>1</sup> See, Robin Respaut and Chad Terhune, "Putting numbers on the rise in children seeking gender care," Reuters, October 6, 2022, accessible at <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/usa-transyouth-data/>.  
Susan Ciancio, "Trans Statistics and the Catholic Response to Transgenderism," Human Life International, May 5, 2023, accessible at <https://www.hli.org/resources/what-percentage-of-people-are-transgender/>.

<sup>2</sup> See, "How 'Inclusion' in Sport is Harming Girls and Women," Fair Play for Women, January 2024, accessible at <https://fairplayforwomen.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/How-inclusion-in-sport-is-harming-women-and-girls-by-Fair-Play-For-Women-14-Jan-2024.pdf>.

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<sup>3</sup> See, Brown GA, Shaw BS, Shaw I. Sex-based differences in track running distances of 100, 200, 400, 800, and 1500m in the 8 and under and 9–10-year-old age groups. *Eur J Sport Sci.* 2024 Feb 5;24(2):217–25. doi: 10.1002/ejsc.12075. PMID: PMC11235854.

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<sup>4</sup> Cass, H., “Independent review of gender identity services for children and young people: Final report,” April 2024, accessible at <https://cass.independent-review.uk/home/publications/final-report/>.

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