



TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY HADLEY HEATH MANNING

(From Shelby, NC, and University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, Class of 2010)

Testimony for the North Carolina State Legislature

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

IWV Supports North Carolina Senate Bill 631 / House Bill 574

Dear North Carolina Lawmakers,

Thank you for considering policies to ensure that women and girls have equal opportunities in sports. Independent Women's Voice, an organization that fights for women and their loved ones by advocating for policy solutions that enhance freedom, opportunities, and well-being, supports SB 631 and HB 574 as amended to include college athletics.

While I was never an elite athlete, I participated in sports throughout my school years. To be entirely honest, I mainly participated in high school track at the encouragement of my drama teacher, who thought that with a sports letter on my resume, I had a chance to win the Morehead Scholarship. She was right.

But participating in sports helped me gain more than a scholarship. It had obvious benefits for my physical health, and also contributed to a sense of confidence and belonging (to a team). Sports helped me learn important lessons about overcoming adversity, persevering through discomfort, challenging myself to be better, and facing life's victories and defeats with grace and sportsmanship.

Now that I am the mother of three children, two girls and one boy, I can see clearly that boys and girls are innately different in many ways. Perhaps the most obvious way that they are different is in their physical biology. Boys and men have, on average, a significant athletic advantage.

Independent Women’s Law Center has produced an authoritative report, [Competition](#), that documents this male athletic advantage. The report collects scientific studies showing that males have larger hearts and lungs, different skeletal structures, more hemoglobin, and more muscle mass on average than females. These differences allow most men to throw farther, run and accelerate faster, punch harder, and jump higher than women. These differences only grow as children do, and puberty confers a significant and lasting advantage that can never be fully reversed – even with hormone therapy.

For this reason, I thank you for striving to protect the female category of sport in education, particularly at the collegiate level where the physical differences, risks of injury, and potential opportunities (including recruitment, scholarships, titles, and awards) are greatest. To ask these elite women athletes to compete with biological males is not just unfair, it is discriminatory.

Growing up in North Carolina, I learned that our state is the place “where the weak grow strong and the strong grow great.” Women may on average be physically weaker than men, but we grow strong when we have opportunities to compete safely and fairly in women-only leagues.

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