

Hearing Testimony
Private Club and Youth Sports Associations

I am a coach and director for a private travel softball organization in MN that serves over 400 female athletes ages 10 to 18 years. The recent executive order signed by the President has provided a necessary restoration of the protections afforded to female athletes by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 (Title IX). This executive order, along with pending federal (H.R. 28, S.9) and state (H.F. 12, S.F. 916) legislation, represent a critical step forward in making these protections permanent.

However, private athletic organizations, and the athletic associations of our MN communities, will not be protected by these actions. These organizations and associations are not academic institutions. They are not funded by the State or Federal government. They do not operate under the jurisdiction of the Federal or State Departments of Education. Minnesota and the Federal government offer seemingly no protection for these female athletes, organizations, and associations.

The female athletes competing in private club athletic programs are dedicated, and strive to be the best in their sport. These young women play for the joy of competition and the chance to earn athletic scholarships. Private sports organizations, and community based athletic associations, offer the highest level of youth amateur play and the greatest opportunity to advance to collegiate athletics. These organizations participate in tournaments and showcase events where the majority of collegiate athletic recruiting takes place. My organization, as an example, will have more than 50 athletes sign Letter of Intent commitments to play NCAA I,II, and III, NJCAA, and NAIA softball in the fall of 2025.

Unfortunately, the young women of Minnesota, competing across all sports, have had to earn these types of scholarships while competing against biological males. While many females have found a way to achieve success, I fear that there are many females that have lost opportunities that they deserved. In addition, we have forced these pre-adolescent and adolescent females to rationalize the complexities of gender ideology. It is hard to answer the questions from a young athlete when they come to realize that their friend, teammate, or competitor is not the gender they thought they were. How is a coach supposed to tell them it is OK?

I am in full support of both H.F. 12 and S.F. 916. I only ask that the additional protection for all female athletes be considered.