

Minnesota Senate



Minnesota House of Representatives

October 24, 2019

As members of the legislature who represent diverse Minnesota districts, we highly value the life lessons for our children and the community esprit de corps engendered by youth sports. Their unique role in teaching lessons of teamwork, leadership, and fairness cannot be underestimated. But sometimes the spirit of competition gets in the way of these positive lessons, and gives way to taunts, jeers, or invective. These are never acceptable, and we rely upon the wisdom of teachers, coaches, and parents, to use these moments to instill the values which bind our community and nation.

But when these negatives give way to insults based on a person's color, national origin, or religion, they are especially odious because they reinvoked the times of our nation's greatest trials. It is a weak point of our national culture that we have historically found ourselves unable to surmount divisions upon these lines, and it remains a perennial impediment to our growth. This is why, when our children's insults cross these lines, we are compelled to respond officially, and to condemn racial affronts in any form. The Oct. 15 girls soccer game between Como Park and Mahtomedi has been widely reported already and we do not presume to reiterate any finger pointing here; but as legislators who represent students who attend these schools, we are compelled to remind our community that we stand united against all forms of bigotry.

Vibrant, diverse communities make up our fabric as Minnesotans, and all of us have a responsibility to be accepting and welcoming in our neighborhoods, our schools, our workplaces, on the athletic field, and in the bleachers. Moreover, the duty to report this behavior should never fall upon the parents of the targeted players. We all must do better in calling out, and working to stop, reprehensible behavior like this. Our kids aren't born to display bigotry; this is learned behavior. As adults, we have a responsibility to be intentional as we instill values of acceptance, respect, and civility.

We hope the appropriate school administrators will not only take appropriate corrective action regarding this incident, but will work to remove all remnants of hate and proactively create respectful atmospheres in the future to ensure no form of discrimination, racism, or bigotry is tolerated at athletic events or anywhere else within Minnesota schools.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Lesch".

John Lesch
State Representative

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alice Hausman".

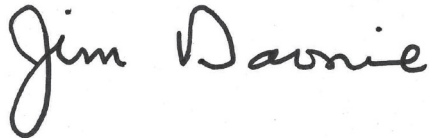
Alice Hausman
State Representative



Rob Ecklund
State Representative



Connie Bernardy
State Representative



Jim Davnie
State Representative



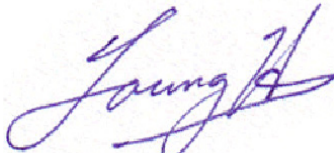
John Persell
State Representative



Sandra L. Pappas
State Senator



Michael Nelson
State Representative



Fong Hawj
State Senator



Jay Xiong
State Representative



Rena Moran
State Representative