Your Government Pages

NC Senate District 47

Sen. Ralph Hise
Ralph.Hise@ncleg.net
919-733-3460

The North Carolina Senate has taken action to protect female athletes in middle and high school sports by prohibiting biological males from playing on women's teams. Senate Bill 631, "Fairness in Women's Sports Act," states that only biological females are eligible to participate on these teams.

It is evident and well-documented that biological males have inherent physiological differences from biological females, such as greater speed, muscle mass, height, and lung capacity, in addition to larger hearts and hands, that give them an unfair advantage in competitive sports.

Female athletes cannot out-train their biology, nor should they be forced to give up scholarships and championships – not to mention be put in harm's way – for the sake of a biological male.

Two brave female athletes attended the bill's committee hearings to testify on behalf of Senate Bill 631.

Riley Gaines is an accomplished swimmer with dozens of accolades under her belt, including five SEC titles and 12 All-American titles. In 2022, while competing for the University of Kentucky at the NCAA championship, she was forced to share a locker room and then compete against Lia Thomas, a biological male who identifies as a woman. Gaines then went on to tie with Lia for the championship title but was forced to watch Lia receive the trophy for the sake of a photo op.

Gaines became emotional during her testimony to the committee, describing the trauma that she and her teammates experienced from having to share a private locker room space with a biological male. She also emphasized the amount of time and discipline that go into competing at her level and reminded the committee of the women who lost out on titles and placements due to Lia Thomas's unfair biological advantages.

The second speaker was a high school senior from Cherokee County who, in the fall of 2022, received a serious head injury when a biological male on the opposing volleyball team spiked a ball directly into her face. The student spoke about the importance of protecting the physical safety of middle and high school girls who want to compete in sports.

The testimony of both these young women paints a clear picture of why the Fairness in Women's Sports Act is needed in North Carolina.

Senator Vickie Sawyer (R-Iredell) the primary sponsor of Senate Bill 631 had this to say about the bill: "At the heart of all sports is competition, and the last thing we want is to take that away from our female athletes. We've made far too much progress to go backward and threaten the loss of a scholarship or state championship."

All 30 Republican Senators signed on to the legislation as sponsors. No Democrats sponsored or voted for the bill.

As always, please share your thoughts with me on issues related to the state government by emailing me at ralph.hise@ncleg.gov or calling me at 919-733-3460.

NC Commissioner of Labor

NC Commissioner of Labor
Josh Dobson
1-800-625-2267

Spring is in full force, and I hope everyone is enjoying this beautiful weather and the extra hours of sunlight! My staff and I have had a busy month traveling the state attending events and safety awards banquets.

Safety Awards Banquet season is in full swing. During the month of April, I attended eight safety awards banquets, including several in the western part of our state. We have 10 banquets on the calendar for May. For more information about our safety awards program and how you can get your business involved next year, please contact Kiley Willard at 919-707-7855 or Kiley.willard@labor.nc.gov.

On April 13, I had the opportunity to attend the SHARP Construction Closing Ceremony at Novant Ballantyne. It was great to see this new medical facility near completion and the impact it will make on the community when it opens later this summer.

April 28, Workers' Memorial Day, is a time to remember and honor the men and women who have tragically lost their lives while on the job. One core mission of the department is to ensure the safety and welfare of all North Carolinians, with the ultimate goal of returning workers home to their families safely at the end of the day. While workplaces are much safer than they were in the past, there is still work to be done and I remain committed to helping employers and employees further improve safety and health in the workplace.

The National Stand-Down to Prevent Falls in Construction is May 1 – 5. Unfortunately, fatalities caused by falls from elevation continue to be a leading cause of death for construction workers. A safety stand-down is a voluntary opportunity for employers to take a break with employees to focus on various hazards and the importance of fall prevention. All interested employers are encouraged to participate. Find more information about this event and other special events going on throughout the year on the Occupational Safety and Health Division portion of our website – labor.nc.gov.

The month of May has two special days for us to remember. Mother's Day is on May 14 this year. Please take the opportunity to wish the special women in your life a Happy Mother's Day and thank them for all that they do. Memorial Day is May 29 and although this day marks the unofficial start of summer, we must remember this day is a time to honor the men and women who died serving in the United States military

NC House District 86

Rep. Hugh Blackwell
919-733-5805
Hugh.Blackwell@ncleg.net

Both the NC House and NC Senate have each passed a bill dealing with the issue of biological males participating in women's or girls' school sports. The issue has come to national attention increasingly as males "transgendering" to females have chosen to participate as women in sports designated for females. In the process, individuals, with their male biological advantages for athletics, have taken competitive spots and trophies away from biological females in high school and collegiate sports. For example, there is the widely reported case of a male-to-female transgender swimmer taking home a trophy in the NCAA title race. This incident provoked significant outrage nationwide, along with support for biological women who lose their fair chance in athletic competitions.

One woman athlete, Riley Gaines, spoke before the House K-12 Education Committee when it was debating the bill to protect women in their designated sports. Riley Gaines was a Division I swimmer for the University of Kentucky. She had won five SEC championships competing solely against biological women. However, when she competed for the NCAA championship against a biologically male "trans" athlete, Gaines said she felt like she was swimming with her hands tied behind her back in going up against the biological male. From presentations to the committee, it is clear that biological differences give male-to-female trans athletes significant, indisputable advantages over biological females in most sports. Such differences in muscle mass, hormones, and skeletal frames deprive women of equal opportunity in athletic competitions. Moreover, there are examples of injuries to girls involved in physical contact sports with male-to-female trans athletes.

Both bills require that biological males in K-12 public, private, and charter schools compete only in sports that correspond with their "reproductive biology and genetics at birth." However, the House and Senate bills differ on higher education. The House bill applies to all state and private universities and community colleges, including their NCAA teams as well as their intermural and intercollegiate teams. The Senate bill does not extend to higher education. In addition, the Senate bill places no restrictions on biological women being allowed to compete in men's sports, leaving the matter to individual schools and the North Carolina High School Athletic Association. The House bill also would allow individual school units and the NCHSAA (and the NCAA, when considering college athletics) to decide if this sort of participation will be allowed, but only if there is no comparable women's sport and the sport is not wrestling. Otherwise, under the House version, biological females could only participate in women's sports. The House and Senate now must resolve differences in their respective bills. It seems a final bill to protect women in women's sports will pass, though its final provisions remain to be settled.