

GUEST OPINION: Will the Equality Act be the end of female sports?

By David E. Prince
Correspondent



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As a husband, pastor, and the father of eight children, five of whom are daughters, there are many reasons I am deeply troubled by H.R. 5, legislation ironically named the Equality Act. In this article, I want to focus on my concerns as a girl dad who loves sports.

As a girl dad, I am concerned about the Equality Act because it will undermine female equality by negating the biological reality of sex. Erasing biological sex as a legal category will negatively affect all of us, but it will disproportionately harm women.

Women and Title IX

Under H.R. 5, vital laws protecting women from discrimination on the basis of “sex” would be upended. A person’s sex would no longer be a matter of biology, but of one’s internal sense of “gender identity.” Title IX is a portion of the United States Education Amendments of 1972, designed to ensure equal opportunities in programs and activities for biological females. The amendment is probably best known for its impact

on high school and college athletics. Title IX reads,

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Of course, when Title IX was adopted, "sex" merely indicated whether a person was biologically male or female. If the legal definition of "sex" is expanded to include non-verifiable gender identities, which H.R. 5 would do, then what is the purpose of Title IX? How can you have an anti-discrimination law in place to protect women if there is no objective way to determine who is male and female? Any attempt to enforce such regulations would be nonsensical.

Impossible standards

In athletics, a refusal to account for biological, sex-dependent differences will legally enshrine inequality in sports. In addition to being unfair, it is insulting and demeaning to females when we proceed as if biological males are the standard by which they ought to evaluate themselves. Acknowledging biological differences in athletic competition is as necessary as acknowledging differences in age.

This is not hyperbole. Female athletes nationwide are already experiencing the unjust effects of our cultural gender chaos. In Texas, a 17-year-old female student transitioning to male and undergoing testosterone treatments won the girl's state championship in wrestling. Performance-enhancing drugs are banned in most sports competitions, but not if allowing them accommodates the student to "transition."

In Connecticut, biological males competing as females combined to win 15 girls state outdoor or indoor championship races. How should we respond if a male who self-identifies as a female seriously injures a female while wrestling? It is not inconceivable that such issues portend the end of public

school athletics.

Even tennis champion, long-time gay rights activist, and open lesbian Martina Navratilova responded with shock and outrage when she heard about biological transgender males competing against females. She penned a February 2019 article titled, "The rules on trans athletes reward cheats and punish the innocent."

Navratilova asserted, "It's insane and it's cheating. I am happy to address a transgender woman in whatever form she prefers, but I would not be happy to compete against her. It would not be fair. To put the argument at its most basic: a man can decide to be female, take hormones if required by whatever sporting organization is concerned, win everything in sight and perhaps earn a small fortune, and then reverse his decision and go back to making babies if he so desires."

Of course, she was pilloried for her common sense comments and walked them back a bit.

Level playing field

My oldest daughter has enough talent as a tennis player competing against other girls to earn an athletic college scholarship to an excellent school. Would that be the case if she had to compete against biological males? No. Not even close.

Let's be honest; legislation like the Equality Act is not about protecting people who have been unfairly excluded from participation in sports. It is about politicizing everything in our culture, including sports, in service of the sexual revolution.

I have no plans to turn my back on the reality of biological science, nor to accept the new sexual orthodoxy. Still, I am gutted when I think about the implications of this legislative assault on my five daughters. There are far worse

ramifications of H.R. 5 than the end of female sports, but as a dad who fiercely loves his daughters and has spent a lifetime enjoying sports, I grieve the thought of that loss in particular.

The truth is found on the opening page of Scripture. "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27). I cannot wait until the weather warms, to watch my daughters compete against other girls on a tennis court. The beauty of competition taking place on a level playing field brings me great joy. I plan to enjoy it as long as I can.

Prince is pastor of Ashland Avenue Church in Lexington, Ky., assistant professor of Christian preaching at Southern Seminary in Lexington, and trustee chairman of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville. He may be contacted at info@ashlandlex.org.

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