



Legislation Text

File #: 65561, **Version:** 1

No funding required.

Opposing Wisconsin Assembly and Senate Bills concerning the ability of transgender individuals to participate in athletics.

WHEREAS, Wisconsin Assembly Bills (AB) 195 and 196 and Senate Bills (SB) SB 322 and SB 323 would prohibit transgender individuals from participating in girls' and women's athletics in Wisconsin's educational institutions from kindergarten through college; and

WHEREAS, according to the Human Rights Campaign, laws that target transgender individuals sends a message that these individuals are less worthy and less valued than others, which increases stigma and contributes to harassment against these individuals; and

WHEREAS, LGBTQ youth already face discrimination, harassment, and poorer school outcomes because of gender expression and gender. According to the 2019 report on school climate from GLSEN,

- 42.5% of LGBTQ students felt unsafe at school because of their gender expression, and 37.4% because of their gender.
- 77.6% of LGBTQ students avoided school functions and 71.8% avoided extracurricular activities because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.
- 59.1% of LGBTQ students reported personally experiencing LGBTQ related discriminatory policies or practices at school, including 10.2% who were prevented or discouraged from participating in school sports because they were LGBTQ.
- 56.9% of LGBTQ students experienced verbal harassment at school based on their gender expression and 53.7% based on their gender.
- LGBTQ students who experienced higher levels of victimization based on their gender expression were three times as likely to have missed school, had a lower grade point average, had lower levels of self-esteem, and had higher levels of depression than their peers who experienced less victimization. Of the LGBTQ students that considered dropping out of school, 42.2% indicated that it was related to harassment they faced at school and 30.1% said it was related to the hostile climate created by gendered school policies and practices; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control and Preventions' 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) found that one in three transgender youth reported attempting suicide, almost one-third reported being a victim of sexual violence, and more than half reported a two-week period of depression; and

WHEREAS, according to a recently published article in the [American Academy of Pediatrics](https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/142/4/e20174218) <<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/142/4/e20174218>>, transgender youth reported alarming levels of attempted suicide, with the highest rates among female to male adolescents (50.8%), followed by adolescents who identified as not exclusively male or female (41.8%), male to female adolescents (28.9%), questioning adolescents (27.9%), female adolescents (17.6%), and male adolescents (9.8%); and

WHEREAS, on January 20, 2021, President Joe Biden signed an executive action on Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation which states in part that, "Every person should be treated with respect and dignity and should be able to live without fear, no matter who they are or whom they love. Children should be able to learn without worrying about whether they will be denied access to the restroom, the locker room, or school sports...All persons should receive equal treatment under the law, no matter their gender identity or sexual orientation;" and

WHEREAS, fifteen states and Washington, D.C. - together home to more than 6.8 million high school students - currently have trans-inclusive state athletic association guidance, and years of open participation of transgender students in those locations have produced no evidence or harms to cisgender people; and

WHEREAS, the NCAA, the International Olympic Committee, and various amateur and professional leagues have supported transgender athletic participation in accordance with their gender identity since 2004; and

WHEREAS, participation in sports is beneficial for healthy youth development, and promotes leadership, self-esteem, discipline, community, and a sense of belonging; and

WHEREAS, inclusive LGBTQ school policies are linked with lower suicide risk, higher grades, lower rates of depressive symptoms, and greater feelings of school safety for LGBTQ students; and

WHEREAS, according to a [CDC Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Review article <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/wr/mm6803a3.htm>](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/wr/mm6803a3.htm), taking steps to create safe learning environments and provide access to culturally competent physical and mental health care are important steps to improving the health of transgender youth; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Common Council of the City of Madison oppose AB 195, AB 196, SB 322, and SB 323 as these bills fail to treat transgender and non-binary individuals with respect and dignity, and will contribute to further stigmatization and harm against these individuals.