



Written by [James Murphy](#) on May 16, 2022

South Carolina Bill Banning Males From Competing in Women's Sports Hits Governor's Desk

A bill protecting the sanctity of women's sports has passed the South Carolina state Legislature and awaits Governor Henry McMaster's signature. House Bill 4608, also known as the Save Women's Sports Act, would ban biological males as denoted by their birth certificates from competing in sports meant for females.

The [bill](#) passed overwhelmingly in the South Carolina General Assembly, passing in the state's House of Representatives by a vote of 82-28 in April and in the Senate last week by a 40-10 vote.



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Should McMaster, a Republican, sign the bill, South Carolina would join a growing list of states who have barred biological males from competing unfairly against females. Conversely, the bill also prohibits females from competing in sports designated for males.

"Sports teams designated for males shall not be open to students of the female sex unless no team designated for females in that sport is offered at the school in which the student is enrolled," reads the text of the bill. "Teams designated for females shall not be open to students of the male sex."

Should McMaster sign the legislation, it would prohibit males who identify as females from taking scholarships and other opportunities from girls.

"It is the intent of the General Assembly to maintain opportunities for female athletes to demonstrate their strength, skills, and athletic abilities, and to provide them with opportunities to obtain recognition and accolades, college scholarships, and numerous other long-term benefits that result from participating and competing in athletic endeavors," the bill reads.

The bill requires schools to designate a student athlete's gender by birth certificate, and would allow for lawsuits from students who feel they were denied an opportunity because a school or group did not follow the rule. It would also allow schools that feel they've been directly harmed by the legislation to sue for relief. Any such lawsuits would need to take place within two years after the alleged harm occurred.

The bill also requires South Carolina to sanction girls wrestling in the state. The legislation does not affect coed athletics, and allows for girls to compete in male athletics if there is no female version of the sport available.

Should the bill become law, South Carolina would join a growing number of states to bar so-called transgender females (biological males) from competing against actual females. The states that have banned males from competing against females are Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Mississippi, Montana, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, and West Virginia, although the West Virginia ban has been blocked by a federal judge.



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Utah passed a similar law in March, when the state's Legislature [overrode](#) Republican Governor Spencer Cox's veto of the legislation.

"I feel that, despite the very strong feelings that are evoked and are involved with many in this body, this bill is not anti-trans athletes in my view," said Republican State Senator Penry Gustafson. "Its focus should be understanding, recognizing and acknowledging the importance of protecting athletic opportunities for biological females in women's sports. I'm sorry but no one will convince me that a trans athlete on a female sports team does not have a significant and unfair physical advantage over both their teammates and their opposing female athletes."

Meanwhile, Democratic State Senator Mia McLeod opposed the legislation and chastised her Republican colleagues, telling them to "stop legislating issues you know nothing about. That would be a good place to start."

The law's very clear intent is to shelter female athletics from the type of intrusion faced by female Connecticut track athletes — for example, female athlete [Selina Soule](#) alleged that she missed out on opportunities because two biological male athletes dominated races in her state. Soule also claimed that she faced retribution from school officials and coaches for claiming that the situation was unfair.

"I've gotten some very difficult requests for me to compete in practice and if I don't fulfill these requests then I can't compete at all," Soule said. "And this never happened before. It only started after my parents met with the school principal."

It seems to just be common sense that biological males should not be allowed to compete against females in sports. But, in this day and age where some men believe they are women and vice versa, apparently even common sense must be legislated.



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