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Sent: Wed, 9 Jun 2021 19:31:26 -0600
To: T9PublicHearing
Subject: Written Comment: Title IX Public Hearing (Improving Enforcement of Title IX)

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Hello--

In order to protect students from sexual harassment and to ensure that all students are provided equal access to education, it is critical that schools uphold the privacy, safety, and dignity of females by providing single-sex spaces. Research has established that "unisex" bathrooms and changing rooms, for example, are far more dangerous for women and girls than female-only spaces (see, for example, <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/throughcatholiclenses/2018/09/co-ed-change-rooms-have-high-sexual-assault-rates/>). Male students who identify as transgender, non-binary, etc. need to be accommodated safely in male spaces, or third spaces need to be made available. In addition to safety, schools must consider the comfort of girls who do not want males included in spaces where they are vulnerable and girls whose religions' forbid mixing with males in such circumstances.

Schools also need to ensure that the access to female-only sports that women fought for for so many years is protected. Males have unfair advantages when competing with females in most sports, which is why separate teams were created in the first place. I have seen people argue that transgender "girls" should be included because it is important to them to have their identities affirmed by being allowed to compete on girls' teams rather than on boys', and because this goal is more important than ensuring girls have a fair chance to win in competitions. This kind of argument minimizes what sports mean to female athletes, particularly those who intend to continue playing after their time in K-12 education and who may be competing for scholarships. If sports are so unimportant, why do schools sponsor them at all?

In short, I would ask you to remember that while a great deal of focus these days is on the needs of transgender people, women are also an oppressed group--a group that has had to fight for equal access in education and in life and that still faces all kinds of violence, harassment, and discrimination. Do not brush females' needs aside and take resources from them in your haste to make males more comfortable. Create new resources and strategies instead.

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