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Rabbi Jonah Pesner

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Rebecca Pringle

National Education Association  
Lisa Rice  
National Fair Housing Alliance

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Human Rights Campaign  
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American Association of  
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American Federation of Teachers

Larry Wright, Jr.  
National Congress of American Indians  
John C. Yang

Asian Americans Advancing Justice |  
AAJJC

President and CEO  
Maya Wiley

January 13, 2025

## Oppose H.R. 28 to Protect Civil Rights

Dear Member of Congress,

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 240 national organizations to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States, and the 405 undersigned organizations, we call for the full inclusion, protection, and celebration of transgender, nonbinary, and intersex youth, including access to extracurricular activities such as athletics, and to school facilities, safe and inclusive school environments, and accurate and inclusive curriculum. **We reject H.R. 28, the so-called Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2025, because it would harm women and girls and undermine civil rights for all students.**

This discriminatory proposal seeks to exclude transgender, nonbinary, and intersex people from athletics programs in schools. Although the authors of the legislation represent themselves as serving the interests of cisgender<sup>1</sup> girls and women, this legislation does not address the longstanding barriers all girls and women have faced in their pursuit of athletics. Instead of providing for equal facilities, equipment, and travel, or any other strategy that women athletes have been pushing for for decades, the bill cynically veils an attack on transgender people as a question of athletics policy.<sup>2</sup>

Youth sports often play a significant role in children's lives and development, helping them to develop critical life skills like communication, teamwork, and leadership. Sports spaces are imperative for all young people, no matter their gender. Transgender, nonbinary, and intersex youth want to participate in team sports for the same reasons as their cisgender peers: to be part of a team, learn sportsmanship, and challenge themselves. School athletics

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<sup>1</sup> The term "cisgender" means that someone's gender identity is the same as the gender they were thought to be at birth. A transgender person is someone whose gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be at birth. A person who is nonbinary is someone who does not identify as a woman or a man. A person who is intersex is someone who is born with or naturally develops genitalia, hormones, internal anatomy, and/or chromosomes that may be perceived as not fitting binary definitions of "male" or "female."

<sup>2</sup> For more information about how to sincerely advance gender equity in athletics, see: <https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Chasing-Equity-Executive-Summary.pdf>, [https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/13\\_Low-Res\\_Title-IX-50-Report.pdf](https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/13_Low-Res_Title-IX-50-Report.pdf), and <https://www.ncwge.org/TitleIX50/NCWGE%20Title%20IX%20At%2050%20-%206.2.22%20vF.pdf>.

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are very often the centerpiece of communities across the country, and denying transgender, nonbinary, and intersex youth the chance to participate only serves to deny them an opportunity to be part of that community, further isolating and stigmatizing these youth.<sup>3</sup>

The civil and human rights community is no stranger to the proffering of a bigoted agenda as if it were about equal opportunity. We know about wolves in sheep's clothing. We know that when affirmative action policies created to level the playing field in higher education admissions are attacked by opponents of voting rights (as was true in the *Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA) v. Harvard College/University of North Carolina* cases), that their agenda is not about the rights of people of color.<sup>4</sup> We know that when companies profit from poverty wages for disabled people, especially in segregated work sites (as is the case for sheltered workshops that pay subminimum wages to disabled workers), that their agenda is not about independence and self-determination for workers.<sup>5</sup> And we know that when opponents of Title IX, including those who have sought for decades to weaken its protections and undermine its enforcement, now present themselves as the law's champions, that their agenda is not about the rights of women and girls.<sup>6</sup>

Targeting and excluding transgender, nonbinary, and intersex students from participation in school programming, including athletics programs, alongside their cisgender peers is harmful to all students and undermines the learning environment for everyone. If schools mark some students effectively as outcasts, they foster an environment where no student is included and safe. H.R.28's vague language and intrusive focus on scrutiny of students' bodies will effectively exclude cisgender girls and women with intersex variations from participation, will invite scrutiny and harassment of any other student perceived by anyone as not conforming to sex stereotypes, and will likely be disproportionately used to target all girls and women of color. We support the full inclusion and protection of transgender, nonbinary, and intersex youth.

We are fortunate that transgender, nonbinary, and intersex people are present in our community, and we fully embrace them as members of our community. As organizations that care deeply about ending sex-

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<sup>3</sup> Denying students the opportunity to participate in athletics because they are transgender, nonbinary, or intersex not only causes the harm of a lost benefit, but anti-LGBTQ policies themselves harm the mental wellbeing of LGBTQ students. See, for example, <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Issues-Impacting-LGBTQ-Youth-MC-Poll-Public-2.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Biskupic, Joan. "Challenge to Harvard's Use of Affirmative Action Was Designed By a Conservative to Reach a Friendly Supreme Court." CNN. October 31, 2022. Available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/30/politics/scotus-affirmative-action-college-admissions-edward-blum/index.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Hopkins, Madison. "Missouri Allows Some Disabled Workers to Earn Less than \$1 an Hour. The State Says It's Fine If That Never Changes." The Kansas City Beacon. November 15, 2022. Available at: <https://www.propublica.org/article/missouri-sheltered-workshops-low-graduation-rate>.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example: <https://dojmt.gov/attorney-general-knudsen-leads-15-state-coalition-against-federal-attempt-to-weaken-title-ix/>; <https://dailymontanain.com/2021/09/01/montana-ag-knudsen-signs-onto-lawsuit-challenging-federal-stance-on-transgender-athletes/>; <https://www.heritage.org/gender/commentary/bidens-new-title-ix-rule-guts-protections-women-and-girls-heres-how-fight-it>; <https://www.regulations.gov/comment/ED-2018-OCR-0064-104813>; <https://www.regulations.gov/comment/ED-2018-OCR-0064-32712>; and <https://www.regulations.gov/comment/ED-2018-OCR-0064-10499>.

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based discrimination and ensuring equal educational opportunities, we support laws and policies that protect transgender people from discrimination, including full and equal participation in sports, access to gender-affirming care, access to school facilities, and access to inclusive curriculum. We firmly believe that an attack on transgender youth is an attack on civil rights.

We ask all members of Congress to strongly oppose H.R. 28 and to reject attacks on transgender, nonbinary, and intersex youth; to commit themselves to meaningfully advancing policies that support equal opportunity; and to reassure all students in the nation's classrooms that they will have the chance to learn, grow, and thrive. If you have any questions, please reach out to Liz King, senior program director at The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, at [king@civilrights.org](mailto:king@civilrights.org).

Sincerely,

National (117)

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
Advocates for Trans Equality  
Advocates for Youth  
AFT  
American Association of University Women (AAUW)  
American Atheists  
American Civil Liberties Union  
American Humanist Association  
Amnesty International USA  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC  
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network  
Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice  
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law  
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action  
CenterLink: The Community of LGBTQ Centers  
Chrysalis  
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues  
COLAGE  
Collective Power for Reproductive Justice  
Council for Global Equality  
EdTrust  
Education Law Center  
Educators for Excellence  
Elevated Access  
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities  
Equal Justice Society  
Equal Rights Advocates  
Equality Federation  
Family Equality

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Feminist Majority Foundation  
FORGE, Inc.  
Gender Justice League  
GLAAD  
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ+ Equality  
GLSEN  
HAIR HAS NO GENDER NFP  
Human Rights Campaign  
Human Rights First  
Ibis Reproductive Health  
Impact Fund  
Indivisible  
interACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth  
Interfaith Alliance  
Japanese American Citizens League  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Justice and Joy National Collaborative  
Keshet  
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement  
Lambda Legal  
LatinoJustice PRLDEF  
Lavender Rights Project  
Liberation is Lit  
LPAC  
Matthew Shepard Foundation  
Movement Advancement Project  
MPact Global  
NAACP  
NAACP Legal Defense Fund  
Nathaniel R. Jones Foundation  
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA)  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Center for Youth Law  
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)  
National Education Association  
National Hispanic Media Coalition  
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund  
National LGBTQ+ Bar Association  
National LGBTQI+ Cancer Network  
National Network of Abortion Funds  
National Organization for Women

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National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Urban League  
National Women's Law Center  
Nclusion Plus  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
Our Schools USA  
Patchwork Transgender Peer Services  
People For the American Way  
PFLAG National  
Planned Parenthood Federation of America  
Point of Pride  
Popular Democracy  
Positive Women's Network-USA  
Pride At Work, AFL-CIO  
Public Justice  
Reproaction  
Reproductive Freedom for All (formerly NARAL Pro-Choice America)  
Safe Schools Action Network  
Sam & Devorah Foundation for Trans Youth  
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)  
SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change  
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF)  
State Innovation Exchange (SiX) Action  
Tbuddy  
The Advocacy Institute  
The Advocates for Human Rights  
The Autistic People of Color Fund  
The Global Trans Equity Project  
The Restaurant Opportunities Centers United (ROC United)  
The TransLatin@ Coalition  
Trans In Color  
Transathlete  
Transcending Adolescence  
TransFamily Support Services  
Transgender Law Center  
TransParent  
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights  
Union for Reform Judaism  
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity  
Voices for Progress  
Voters of Tomorrow  
Western States Center  
Youth MOVE National

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Youth Seen  
YWCA USA

Regional/State/Local (289)

African American Office of Gay Concerns  
Aces NYC  
Adirondack North Country Gender Alliance  
Advocates for Children of New York  
AJL Community Health  
Alliance For Full Acceptance SC  
American Federation of Teachers - Oregon  
Arkansas Black Gay Men's Forum  
Association of Latinos/as/xs Motivating Action  
Azalea Coffee Bar  
Bans Off Miami  
Basic Rights Oregon  
Battle Born Progress  
Bolingbrook Pride  
Brenham PFLAG  
Brooklyn Community Pride Center  
CA LGBTQ Health and Human Services Network  
CalPride  
CAMP Rehoboth  
Campaign for Southern Equality  
Carolina Abortion Fund  
Casa Freehold  
Cascade AIDS Project  
Central Coast Coalition for Inclusive Schools  
Charlotte Trans Health  
Chattanooga Trans Liberation Collective  
Chicago Teachers Union LGBTQ+ Committee  
Chicago Therapy Collective  
City of West Hollywood  
Courage California  
Crescent Care  
Deerfield IL Chapter of PFLAG  
Delmarva Pride Center  
Denver Health and Hospital Authority  
Detroit Area Youth Uniting Michigan (DAYUM)  
Disability Law Centerr  
Disability Rights California  
Disability Rights Oregon  
East Bay Sanctuary Covenant

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Eastern PA Trans Equity Project  
Education Law Center Pennsylvania  
Envision:You  
Equality California  
Equality Community Center  
Equality Florida  
Equality Illinois  
Equality Maine  
Equality Michigan  
Equality New Mexico  
Equality NY - Buffalo Chapter  
Equality Ohio  
Equality South Dakota  
Equality Texas  
Equitas Health  
Fair Wisconsin  
Fairness Campaign  
Family Forward Oregon  
Famous Adventures Summer Camp  
Fenway Health  
FL National Organization for Women  
Florida Council of Churches  
Four Corners Rainbow Youth Center  
Freedom Oklahoma  
Garden State Equality  
Gender Alchemy  
Gender Justice LA  
GenderNexus  
Georgia Equality  
GLSEN Arizona  
GLYS Western New York Inc.  
GRACE/End Child Poverty California  
Grand Rapids Trans Foundation  
GSAFE  
Harriet Hancock Center Foundation  
Hawai'i 'Ohana Support Network  
Health Equity Alliance for LGBTQ+ New Mexicans  
Howard Brown Health  
Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation  
Hyacinth Foundation  
Illinois Migrant Council  
Inland Empire Prism Collective  
Inland Oasis

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Jewish Community Relations Council of Broward County  
Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Phoenix  
Just Us at Oasis Center  
Kol Ami  
Latino Equality Alliance  
Levine Center To End Hate/Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester  
LGBT Center of Raleigh  
LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin  
LGBT Community Network  
LGBTQ Center OC  
LGBTQ Community Center of the Desert  
LGBTQ+ Center Lake County  
LGBTQ+ Community Center of Darke County  
LGBTQI+ Rights Clinic, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law  
Life Is Work  
Los Angeles LGBT Center  
Louisiana Trans Advocates  
Louisville Youth Group  
Loving Beyond Understanding  
Lyon Martin Community Health  
LYRIC  
Mabel Wadsworth Center  
MaineTransNet  
Make it Better for Youth  
Make the Road Nevada  
Mama Bears Playgroup  
Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition  
MassEquality  
Metro Trans Umbrella Group  
Michigan Alliance for Special Education  
Michigan Education Justice Coalition  
Michigan Student Power Alliance  
Monica Roberts Resource Center  
Montgomery Pride United/ Bayard Rustin Community Center  
Muncie OUTreach LGBTQ+ Center  
Naper Pride  
Nevada Chapter of the National Organization for Women  
New Alternatives For Homeless LGBT Youth  
New Haven Pride Center  
New Jersey Safe Schools Coalition  
New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs  
NEW Pride Agenda  
Next Up Action Fund



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North County LGBTQ Resource Center  
North Dakota Human Rights Coalition  
North Shore Alliance of LGBTQ+ Youth (NAGLY)  
NoVA Prism Center  
Office of Strategic Partnerships, California Department of Health Care Services  
One Colorado  
one-n-ten  
OUT Maine  
OutCenter Southwest Michigan  
OutFront Minnesota  
OUTMemphis  
OutNebraska  
OutReach LGBTQ+ Community Center  
PAVE  
Peoria Proud  
PFLAG Aiken (South Carolina)  
PFLAG Akron  
PFLAG Angleton- Lake Jackson  
PFLAG Athens Area, Georgia  
PFLAG Cape Cod  
PFLAG Chicago Metro  
PFLAG Clayton-Concord  
PFLAG Collingswood  
PFLAG Columbus, Ohio  
PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois  
PFLAG Danville/ Central Susquehanna Valley  
PFLAG DanvilleKY  
PFLAG Dayton  
PFLAG Decatur  
PFLAG Deerfield IL  
PFLAG Delaware  
PFLAG Detroit  
PFLAG DuPage  
PFLAG Edwardsville  
PFLAG Flat Rock/Hendersonville, NC  
PFLAG Fort Collins / Northern Colorado  
PFLAG Fort Wayne  
PFLAG Fort Worth  
PFLAG Frederick  
PFLAG Geneva/Tri-Cities  
PFLAG Grayslake/Round Lake  
PFLAG Greater Boston  
PFLAG Greater St. Louis

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PFLAG GREENSBURG  
PFLAG Hartford  
PFLAG Homewood-Flossmoor  
PFLAG HuntsvilleTX  
PFLAG Illinois  
PFLAG Ithaca-Cortland  
PFLAG Lafayette/Tippecanoe County Indiana  
PFLAG Lamorinda  
PFLAG Los Angeles  
PFLAG Madison WI  
PFLAG Manhattan Beach/South Bay  
PFLAG meto chapter  
PFLAG NYC  
PFLAG O'ahu  
PFLAG Oakland-East Bay  
PFLAG Peoria  
PFLAG Plymouth-Canton  
PFLAG Port Charlotte Chapter  
PFLAG Sacramento  
PFLAG Salisbury  
PFLAG San Diego County  
PFLAG San Francisco  
PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula  
PFLAG Sandy Springs  
PFLAG Seattle  
PFLAG Sonoma County  
PFLAG Southern Maryland  
PFLAG Springfield/SWMO  
PFLAG Tinley Park  
PFLAG Tri-Valley  
PFLAG Valparaiso  
PFLAG West Chester/Chester County  
PFLAG Youngstown  
Philadelphia Asian and Queer  
Pride Action Tank/AIDS Foundation Chicago  
Pride at Work - Hawai'i  
Pride Center of Terre Haute Inc.  
Pride Center of Western New York, Inc.  
Pride Community Center, Inc (Bryan/College Station, Texas)  
Pride in Action, Southern IL  
Pride Lafayette (Indiana)  
Princess Janae Place  
PRISM FL

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Prism United  
Pro-Choice North Carolina  
PROMO Missouri  
QT Summer Camp  
Queer Keys  
Queer Trans Black Indigenous People of Color Agency  
Queermunity Collaborative  
Rabbi Joseph H. Gumbiner Community Action Project at Tucson Jewish Museum & Holocaust Center  
Rad Family, a project of North Jersey Pride  
Rainbow Collective of WNY  
Rainbow Families Bay Area Community Group  
Rainbow Labs  
Rainbow Pride Youth Alliance  
Reproductive Justice Action Collective  
Resource Center  
Rochester Rainbow Union  
Rockland County Pride Center  
Rocky Mountain Equality  
Rogue Action Center  
Sacramento LGBT Community Center  
Salisbury Pride  
San Joaquin Delta College  
San Joaquin Pride Center, INC.  
Save Our Sisters United  
Serving at-risk families everywhere, Inc.  
Sexual Assault Services Organization  
Silver State Equality-Nevada  
Sioux Falls Pride  
SMYAL  
SOJOURN: Southern Jewish Resource Network for Gender and Sexual Diversity  
Solano Pride Center  
Somos Familia Valle  
Soul 2 Soul Sisters  
South Carolina Equality  
Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation  
Southwest Women's Law Center  
Spencer Pride, Inc.  
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
Support FHPS Action  
TaskForce Prevention and Community Services  
Tennessee Equality Project  
The Center Project  
The Cherry Fund

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The DC LGBTQ+ Community Center  
The GLO Center  
The Human Rights Alliance  
The Lavender Room  
The LGBTQ Center of Southern Nevada  
The LIAM Foundation  
The LOFT LGBTQ+ Community Center  
The Mahogany Project  
The Pinta Pride Project and Buffalo Grove Pride  
The Pride Center at Equality Park  
The San Diego LGBT Community Center  
The Sports Bra  
The Transformation Project South Dakota  
Towards an Anti-Racist North Kingstown (TANK)  
TRACTION  
Trans Maryland  
Trans-E-Motion  
Transformative Justice Law Project of Illinois  
Transgender Michigan  
Transgender Resource Center of New Mexico  
Transgender Resource, Advocacy and Network Service  
TransOhio  
T-time Transgender Support  
Uniting Pride of Champaign County  
Upstate NY Black & Latino Pride, Inc.  
Viet Rainbow of Orange County  
Waves Ahead Corp  
We Are Family  
Wild West Access Fund of Nevada  
WNY Man Made Men  
Women's Rights and Empowerment Network  
Youth Leadership Institute  
Youth Outlook  
Youth OUTright  
Zebra Youth