

# Alaska State Legislature

**SESSION ADDRESS:**

Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau Alaska 99801  
907-465-3743  
800-565-3743

Sen.Shelley.Hughes@akleg.gov

**INTERIM ADDRESS:**

600 E Railroad Avenue  
Wasilla AK 99654  
907-376-3725

## Senator Shelley Hughes

Senate District F—Palmer, Chugiak, Mirror Lake, Peters Creek, Eklutna, Fairview Loop, Gateway, Butte, Lazy Mountain

### **SB 140 Even Playing Field Act** **Sponsor Statement**

*“An Act relating to school athletics, recreation, athletic teams, and sports”*

Fifty years ago, women’s sports changed forever. In 1972 slightly over 300,000 women and girls played college and high school sports in the United States. When I was a teenager, the only option for a female to be connected to a public-school athletic program was to be a cheerleader, and the cheerleading squads were small (5-10) at each high school. As of 2022, the number of female athletes in the U.S. has increased by over 900 percent to more than 3.5 million women and girls thanks to the passage of Title IX.

This year, as we celebrate Title IX’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, women and girls stand, once more, at risk of losing an even playing field in sports. An ever-increasing trend of males and transgender women who were born male playing in women’s sports threatens competition and fairness. Girls and women should not be robbed of the chance to be selected for a team, to win a championship, or to be awarded a college scholarship due to the physical advantages of transgender women.

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

The goal of SB140 is not to preclude transgender athletes from competition or equal access to sports and athletic programs in schools. Rather, thanks to Title IX, transgender athletes are protected from discrimination in sports and promised equal access to athletic programs.

The goal of SB140 to ensure discrimination against girls and women does not occur - that they are treated fairly and not disadvantaged in athletic programs compared to male-bodied athletes. Undeniable evidence and scientific research conclude that the average biological male body is stronger, larger, and faster than the average female body even after testosterone suppression treatment. This is particularly true in high school athletics. For example, many male high school track and field athletes consistently beat the times of the best female Olympians who've trained intensely for years. Male-bodied athletes have a substantial physical advantage over female athletes in sports, regardless of the beliefs that the male-bodied athlete may hold about their sexuality or gender identity.

For decades, biological sex-specific separations in athletics have preserved competition while allowing women the chance to win. The great triumph of Title IX and the success of millions of women in athletics must not be discarded in the name of social progress. SB140 stands for an equal opportunity for all.

The bill would require public schools to designate their athletic teams male, female, or co-ed and a student who participates in an athletic team designated female to be female based on her biological sex. Private schools competing against public schools would also be required to comply with these rules.

Staff Contact:  
Daniel Phelps

[Daniel.Phelps@akleg.gov](mailto:Daniel.Phelps@akleg.gov)

907-465-1172