

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 25, 2024
8:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Jamie Allard, Co-Chair
Representative Justin Ruffridge, Co-Chair
Representative Mike Prax
Representative CJ McCormick
Representative Tom McKay
Representative Rebecca Himschoot
Representative Andi Story

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 183

"An Act relating to school athletics, recreation, athletic teams, and sports; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HB 183 OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 183

SHORT TITLE: DESIGNATE SEX FOR SCHOOL-SPONSORED SPORTS
SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) ALLARD

| | | |
|----------|-----|---------------------------------|
| 04/28/23 | (H) | READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS |
| 04/28/23 | (H) | EDC, JUD |
| 03/15/24 | (H) | EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106 |
| 03/15/24 | (H) | Heard & Held |
| 03/15/24 | (H) | MINUTE(EDC) |
| 03/25/24 | (H) | EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106 |

WITNESS REGISTER

MORGAN LIM
Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

SALIM HOUCK, representing self
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

ALEXANDER ROSALES, representing self
Eagle River, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 183.

STARLA MILLER, representing self
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

LINDSEY BANNING, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

JANICE MICHAUD-WHALEN, representing self
Valdez, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

JESSE SAIKI, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

NITHYA THIRU, Program Manager
ACLU of Alaska Queer and Trans Justice Program
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

MONICA WHITMAN, representing self
Eagle River, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

JOSH SMITH, representing self
Chugiak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

KATHY TODD, representing self
Valdez, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

LIN DAVIS, representing self
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

DAVID LOCKARD, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

KC CASORT, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

LAURA STEELE, representing self
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

ANGIE FRAKAER, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

XOCHITL MUNOZ, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

ALEXIS HART, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

JAMES MCLLMAIL, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

VALERRAIANE DATTAN, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

LYNN HALLFORD, representing self
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 183.

BROOK BEVERIDGE, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

RITA TROMETTER
representing self
North Pole, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 183.

MENEKA THIRU, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

KENNETH CARON, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 183.

KATE JOHNSON, representing self
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 183.

KATHY BURGOYNE, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 183.

MEGHAN GERVAIS, representing self
Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to HB 183.

JACQUELYN GOFORTH, representing self
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 183.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[8:00:53 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR JAMIE ALLARD called the House Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Representatives Prax, McCormick, McKay, Himschoot, Story, Allard, and Ruffridge were present at the call to order.

The committee took an at-ease from 8:01 a.m. to 8:02 a.m.

HB 183-DESIGNATE SEX FOR SCHOOL-SPONSORED SPORTS

[8:02:10 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR ALLARD announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 183, "An Act relating to school athletics, recreation, athletic teams, and sports; and providing for an effective date."

[8:02:53 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STORY pointed out that typically, amendment deadlines are set after public testimony is heard because sometimes during testimony something is brought up in the bill that others might consider while creating amendments. She asked whether there could be an additional amendment deadline.

CO-CHAIR ALLARD replied that she would take it into consideration, and confirmed she received Representative Story's e-mail.

[8:03:18 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR ALLARD opened public testimony on HB 183.

[8:03:37 AM](#)

MORGAN LIM, Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates, testified on behalf of Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates (PPAA) of Alaska in opposition to HB 183. He referred to the bill as "blatantly discriminatory," designed to exclude trans girls the ability to participate fully in sports and their school community. He opined that the bill is part of a coordinated nationwide attack aimed at erasing trans people from school sports, their communities, and all aspects of public life. He said trans youth should be treated with dignity and should have the opportunity to live a healthy life, and they want to play sports and be part of a team where they feel they belong. Trans youths should not be unfairly targeted, he stated.

[8:05:44 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:05 a.m. to 8:07 a.m.

[8:07:11 AM](#)

SALIM HOUCK, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183 and related that he began transitioning while attending Juneau Douglas High School. He said participating in extracurricular opportunities gave him a sense of community and helped him feel safe at school. He stated he had supportive teachers in school and opined that the bill would make it difficult for schools to support their transgender students in the way they support all other students. Denying trans students to participate in sports can have many negative outcomes, and transgender girls - like all girls - have the best chance to strive when they are supported and treated like their peers, he said, and he urged the committee to vote no on HB 183.

[8:09:04 AM](#)

ALEXANDER ROSALES, representing self, testified in support of HB 183. He stated that he was severely disappointed in previous

testimony relating to being upset about "140" and letting that emotion carry over. He said he is here for all the women and girls out there, and that trans women are men biologically. The lines are blurred allowing little boys to go into little girls' locker rooms and "that's where it starts," he opined, and as a dad he stressed this is not okay. He paraphrased a quote from Pastor John from Texas, stating that a person who votes down [the proposed legislation] is "either a punk or pervert."

[8:10:56 AM](#)

STARLA MILLER, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. She related that when she went through the school system, [trans children in sports] may not have been an issue, but she was the only black child in her neighborhood, and she opined that the bill is the same as the elements of racism and it does not "bring us together." Passing the bill, she said, would be detrimental; these children need to be cared for and accepted, and voting in support of the bill sends the message that "we do not accept you or want you."

[8:13:05 AM](#)

LINDSEY BANNING, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183 and related that she is the mother of two teen athletes - one who is trans. She said she does not believe in codifying hate and discrimination and opined that the bill would enshrine into law and ensure trans kids can't play games with their friends and be part of a team. She said the bill is not about protecting girls in sports, and if it were, it would be focused on the barriers for girls and women in sports which she offered her belief are cost and access. She said trans girls are girls, and the legislature does not get to debate that.

[8:15:28 AM](#)

JANICE MICHAUD-WHALEN, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. She related that she is a retired teacher and coach and opined that HB 183 is unnecessary, discriminatory, and damaging. She paraphrased part of the bill referencing a competitive edge, and offered her belief that may apply to adult athletes, but research showed that those attributes do not apply depending on when one started their transition. She offered examples of her own teen years and that she was bigger and more coordinated than some males. She urged the committee to pay more attention to real school needs such as better pay for teachers and descent retirement plans, and to vote no on HB 183.

[8:17:32 AM](#)

JESSE SAIKI, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. She expressed her disappointment that the bill exists in "our great state" and opined that the bill violates students' rights to privacy and safety and denies the existence of intersect transgender and two-spirit people who have existed longer than those who wrote the bill and support it. Access to school sports is about community and where many find their way and build confidence. She said true support for women would include trans women and girls.

[8:19:23 AM](#)

NITHYA THIRU, Program Manager, ACLU of Alaska Queer and Trans Justice Program, testified in opposition to HB 183, which she opined is a violation of students' rights and privacy and is clearly discriminatory in its intent to prevent trans girls from participating in sports. She said trans girls are girls, and that the Constitution of the State of Alaska protects the privacy and due process of all Alaskans including public school students. She offered her belief that the only thing the bill would do is sanction exclusion and bullying of transgender and LGBTQIA youths.

[8:21:36 AM](#)

MONICA WHITMAN, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. She spoke to the NCAA's policy being aligned with the International Olympic Committee and its principles include inclusion regardless of an athlete's gender identity expression or sex variation. She asked why K-12 students would be held to more restrictions and invasive policy than Olympic athletes. She opined that the bill puts trans kids in a culture war that has nothing to do with fairness in sports, and she asked the committee to "make it make sense." As a parent, she stated she opposed HB 183.

[8:23:00 AM](#)

JOSH SMITH, representing self, shared that he was a U.S. Air Force veteran, and he stated that he adamantly opposed HB 183, calling it a solution looking for a problem. There is no evidence that trans girls pose any threat to girls' sports or take anything from cisgender kids, he said, and the validity of "these kids" is undermined, and they deserve to be seen and

respected for who they are. He said it does not have to be this way in the state of Alaska. He stated that school and school sports are a safe place for kids to be themselves and belong to a team and community. He added that the exclusion of trans kids causes immense harm.

[8:25:07 AM](#)

KATHY TODD, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. She pointed out that the discussion is around high school sports, not the Olympics, and high school sports are inherently not fair, she said, but they are also about teamwork and traveling with the team. She opined that trans girls are not pretending to be girls, they are girls, and no one is going to pretend to be a girl in order to win the high school track meet. She reiterated that she is against HB 183 and said it is not something "that we should be doing."

[8:26:52 AM](#)

LIN DAVIS, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183 and referred to the bill as "manufactured hate." She urged the committee to focus on the good and educate kids instead of frightening them and causing anxiety. Public schools should be a "community blanket toss" with joy and help students be their best and brightest selves. She said the bill is government control and mean towards a small group of people in Alaska. She offered personal examples of sports helping her and said all kids deserve to play.

[8:29:01 AM](#)

DAVID LOCKARD, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183 and related that he has a transgender son and that transgenders are human beings. He opined that the state should be addressing pressing issues such as the budget, education funding, sexual assault, and domestic violence. He noted the "horrendous record" in Alaska of assault against girls and women, and that transgender athletes do not pose a problem in Alaska schools. The bill would violate student privacy and subject schools to frivolous lawsuits, he said, and he urged the committee to vote no on HB 183.

[8:30:57 AM](#)

KC CASORT, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. She offered her belief that the bill violates the Alaska

Constitution and student privacy rights and creates new ways to sue schools. She expressed her frustration with committees deciding to spend limited time and resources making baseless attacks on children rather than addressing the real issues in sports and schools.

[8:32:58 AM](#)

LAURA STEELE, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. She expressed her disappointment in some legislators who may not understand the nuance or terminology of the bill they are legislating. She commended the staff of Legislative Legal Services for providing thoughtful, fact-based information at last week's hearing. She stated she is not worried about her daughter losing in sports to a trans girl and any true athlete would express that losing in sports is just as important as winning, she said. She added that she is more worried about school funding, adequate pay for teachers, and teacher retention; all which the body has a responsibility to address.

[8:35:02 AM](#)

ANGIE FRAKAER, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. She opined that the bill is a distraction from the real education issues in Alaska, as well as being unscientific and unconstitutional. Trans girls are girls and HB 183 does not protect children but puts them directly in harm's way, she said.

[8:36:10 AM](#)

XOCHITL MUNOZ, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. She offered her opinion that the bill targets trans girls in middle and elementary school, and the purpose of sports during this time is to have fun, exercise, learn teamwork, and make friends. She said transgender girls are relatively rare, Alaska is a small state by population, and not every trans girl wants to play sports. She opined that passing a bill that would kick a few children out of activities is cruel and sends a message that they should not exist. She concluded, "Please stop attacking them."

[8:37:35 AM](#)

ALEXIS HART, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. She shared that she had met many pedophiles and abusers in her life, and none were trans. She added that she never felt unsafe in a trans person's presence but had felt unsafe around

those who think gender is defined by a narrow thought. The bill hinges on the concept that men are better at sports than women and that, she said, proves the bill is textbook discrimination. She stated that the bill goes against history and science and reiterated that she strongly opposed it.

[8:39:54 AM](#)

JAMES MCILMAIL, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. He stated that he agreed with a prior testifier who related that the percentage of trans girls in Alaska would be very low, and he opined that the committee is wasting their time on ultra conservative, reactionary forces trying to legislate morality. There is nothing wrong with adolescent children playing together, he said.

[8:41:45 AM](#)

VALERRAIANE DATTAN, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. She said that she admired dedication to women's rights and protecting girls in their athletic pursuits, but she opined that the bill is a thinly veiled attack on trans girls and is discriminatory against a vulnerable and marginalized population. She said HB 183 violates privacy rights and there are other issues that should be addressed. Trans girls are girls, she said, and she begged the committee not to support HB 183.

[8:43:21 AM](#)

LYNN HALLFORD, representing self, testified in support of HB 183 and thanked the committee for bringing the bill forward. She offered her belief that the bill supported fairness for girls and sports and that there are biological differences between boys and girls. She related instances as to what happens when boys are allowed to play girls sports and encouraged the committee to support the bill and "keep it going." She concluded by thanking committee members for their hard work.

[8:44:10 AM](#)

BROOK BEVERIDGE, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. She opined that the bill is discriminatory against trans children, and she emphasized that "children" are under discussion. The bill targets transgender athletes and could lead to further stigmatization and isolation of trans students which undermines their safety and social and emotional

development, she said. All persons should be allowed to participate in sports, and she urged the committee to focus on "things that actually matter" in the state.

[8:45:51 AM](#)

RITA TROMETTER, representing self, testified in support of HB 183 and stated that there is no fairness in sports when females must compete against trans who were born male and transgender is not a level field in sports, she said. She opined that being transgender is an unacceptable reason to steal scholarships from females and that it is unfortunate that the education system supports alternative lifestyles rather than improving students' education. She asked to keep sports for the person of their birth gender and support HB 183.

[8:46:55 AM](#)

MENEKA THIRU, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183 and opined that "this type of legislation" often has a negative impact not only on trans girls but on cis girls. She stated that asking any student to comply with the bill violates their right to privacy. The bill is being framed as a women's rights bill, she said, and she offered her opinion that it is a huge step backwards.

[8:48:15 AM](#)

KENNETH CARON, representing self, testified in support of HB 183. He offered his belief that the proposed legislation speaks of citizens of the state, not one gender or another, and he spoke of competition amongst youths. He added that he had seen transgender girls become champions and questioned how competitors are supposed to believe the trans girl does not have an advantage. He said it was an unfair decision and thanked the committee for allowing him to speak.

[8:50:02 AM](#)

KATE JOHNSON, representing self, testified in support of HB 183. She thanked the committee for taking on "this controversial topic" and that she supported protecting biological girls in school sports. She said it is not worth the unnecessary risks to have boys compete on girls' teams resulting in injuries. Winning and losing only counts when competing against equal rivals, and she expressed her gratitude that Alaska is looking

to protect girls in sports. She reiterated that she fully supported HB 183.

[8:50:58 AM](#)

KATHY BURGOYNE, representing self, testified in support of HB 183. She stated that she and her husband are the parents of adult children. She said that male puberty gives undeniable strength and size advantages, and in the name of safety, she pleaded to keep girls sports for biological girls and to vote yes on HB 183.

[8:51:42 AM](#)

MEGHAN GERVAIS, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 183. She opined that the bill is inhumane to trans people and related that she is the parent of a trans child. Trans kids are people, and she offered her belief that that gets lost in "discussions like this." She stated that in terms of harm, there is minimal harm in girls competing against trans girls, but the potential harm done to trans kids who are excluded from participating in sports is tremendous.

[8:53:32 AM](#)

JACQUELYN GOFORTH, representing self, testified in support of HB 183. She offered examples of her own children and the "enormous difference" in physiology between males and females. It would be very evident if a female "went up against" a male, she observed. She gave further examples of changes when one hits puberty and reiterated that males and females have inherent qualities that make them different, which she briefly expounded on.

[8:55:44 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR ALLARD offered an email address for those who could not testify. After ascertaining no one else wished to testify, she closed public testimony on HB 183.

[8:56:18 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STORY thanked the testifiers and said because of constitutional issues, she would not support the legislation. She further expressed her concern over the discrimination that trans children would face.

[8:57:07 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCKAY moved to report HB 183 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes.

[8:57:26 AM](#)

Representatives McCormick and Story objected.

A roll call vote was taken. Representatives McKay, Prax, Allard, and Ruffridge voted in favor of HB 183. Representatives McCormick, Himschoot, and Story voted against it. Therefore, HB 183 was reported out of the House Education Standing Committee by a vote of 4-3.

[8:58:05 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:58 a.m. to 9:02 a.m.

[9:02:55 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR ALLARD announced future business.

[9:03:17 AM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Education Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 9:03 a.m.