

White House responds to TFL-signed letter on girls' sports

The U.S. Department of Education has responded to a letter sent by dozens of pro-family organizations, including The FAMiLY Leader, with assurances that a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision on “gender identity” will not prevent the Trump administration from working to protect girls’ sports.

In June 2020, Bob Vander Plaats, president and CEO of The FAMiLY Leader, joined national allies and dozens of peers from the Family Policy Alliance in writing [a letter to President Trump and the Department of Education](#).

“In 2017, the Department of Education, along with the Department of Justice, reinforced the obvious need for sex-segregated bathrooms and locker rooms under Title IX for boys and girls,” the letter pointed out. “[But] many activists now claim that the recent *Bostock v. Clayton* opinion from the Supreme Court means that schools *must* permit biological males to compete on girls’ teams.”

“The continued success of our women and girls under Title IX depends upon your strong stand against a political agenda that frankly doesn’t care about preserving women’s opportunities in sports,” the letter continued. “Female athletes need the Trump Administration to lead the way in preserving the heart of Title IX and ensuring women and girls have access to exclusively female sports teams and a fair playing field.”

In addition to Vander Plaats, the original letter was signed by representatives from the Family Policy Alliance, Concerned Women for America, Heritage Action for America, Focus on the Family, Alliance Defending Freedom, Eagle Forum, Save Women’s Sports, Truth and Liberty Coalition, Hands Across the Aisle

Women's Coalition, American Principles Project, and dozens of pro-family state organizations.

On Sept. 1, 2020, Kimberly M. Richey, acting assistant secretary for civil rights at the U.S. Department of Education, penned [an official response](#), agreeing to preserve women's sports for women athletes.

The letter asserts Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and the U.S. Department of Education "share your commitment to ensuring that Title IX is vigorously enforced at every level of education."

"Title IX regulations authorize single-sex sports teams," the letter states unequivocally. "The Supreme Court's opinion in *Bostock* does not affect the Department's position that its Title IX regulations authorize single-sex teams based only on biological sex at birth—male or female—as opposed to a person's gender identity."

"The *Bostock* decision was narrowly decided under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and by its own terms, does not control Title IX," the response concludes. "The Department will continue to vigorously support and protect female student athletes under Title IX."

Before Congress passed Title IX in 1972, girls in America were offered fewer opportunities in sports and represented a far smaller share of student athletes. Few colleges participated in any championship-level women's sports, and American Olympic gold medal winner Donna De Varona famously could not even obtain a college athletic scholarship.

According to statistics reported by the Washington Post, before Title IX, 160,000 men participated in NCAA sports compared to just 30,000 women. Female athletic participation at the high school level was even worse. Only 295,000 girls participated in high school sports compared to 3.67 million boys.

Today, however, there are 2.6 million girls playing high school sports and over 216,000 women competing in the NCAA.

In June 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court's *Bostock* decision asserted employers, under Title VII of Civil Rights Act of 1964, could not discriminate based on "gender identity." Activists and court cases have since arisen, attempting to assert Title IX must also include "gender identity," compelling schools to include biological males who "identify" as female to participate in women's sports.