

I respectfully submit the following comments about Title IX for the consideration by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, in connection with its recent hearing on the student survey.

As a basketball and softball varsity letter-winner in high school and a member of my college Academic All American Cross Country team, I know the benefits of participating in women's sports. Without question, the physical training habits and mental discipline I developed through participating in women's sports have helped me achieve great things very early in my professional life, as I currently serve as the Executive Director of Eagle Forum at the age of 25.

One of the issues I work on at Eagle Forum is Title IX. Before I examined the policy side of equality in sports I never quite made the connection between what I experienced and observed in college athletics and how this policy affects the long term societal stability of relationships between men and women.

The use of the "proportionality test" in measuring Title IX leads directly to gender quotas on college campuses. Many schools are fulfilling this test by eliminating men's teams. Requiring the same proportion of women in sports to women enrolled in the school does not help women, but is, in fact, hurtful to us in the long run.

As a female athlete, I learned much from my male counterparts—often how to train harder and better, as well as how to dig deeper and go beyond what I thought I could accomplish. When we practiced against the boys' basketball team in high school, we were faster and stronger the next time we took the court against another female team. In college, when I wanted to quit on a hot summer day training for the opening race of the cross country season, the men's team cheered me on and a couple of them came back to run with me despite their own exhaustion. These experiences could easily have been wiped away had the Title IX proportionality test wrecked its havoc on my campus and forced the elimination of these men's teams.

As a life-long female athlete, I am naturally strong in every sense of the word—physically, intellectually, and mentally. Most of my fellow female athletes share this characteristic. We want equally strong men in our lives—brothers, friends, boyfriends, and husbands. Men who challenge us and support us. These strong men can be shaped and molded to achieve greatness the same way as female athletes—through the opportunity to train, compete, and succeed on the athletic field.

Taking away these opportunities and forcing schools to eliminate men's sports teams leaves many men less interested in college and women less able to find male counterparts that adequately challenge her to be the best she can be.

Instead of eliminating men's teams, I suggest eliminating the proportionality test and instead instituting a survey given to the student body to gauge actual interest in athletic programs. This will allow all students a voice in what programs and teams are offered, ensuring a level and full playing field.

Thank you for considering these comments.

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