

[your name and contact information]

February 2, 2021

Representative Mark Pocan  
10 East Doty Street, Suite 405  
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Representative Pocan:

This is to strongly urge you and our fellow Democrats to revise the Equality Act before passing this landmark legislation. While protections from discrimination for LGBT people are long overdue, the Equality Act, as passed by the House in 2019, conflates sex with gender identity, thus infringing on rights and protections for women and girls.

I am a 62-year-old woman and life-long Democrat, who has voted in every election since she was old enough to do so – and who has always voted for you.

But this is a very bad bill and a deal-breaker for many of us. It must be re-written to explicitly protect biological women and girls, most especially in private areas such as locker rooms and changing rooms, in places where we recover from male violence, such as domestic violence shelters and rape crisis centers, and in provisions made for our sex, such as Title IX.

Allowing males who claim female identity to compete in women's and girls' sport will undermine the gains we made due to Title IX. Males have, on average, larger hearts, greater lung capacity, more fast twitch muscle fibers, longer and stronger bones, less pronounced angle where femur joins to hip (because their hips are narrower) which enables them to run faster – the list goes on and on. A recent analysis by developmental biologist Emma Hilton of 12 longitudinal studies examining the effects of 12 months of testosterone suppression in males claiming female identity found only a modest reduction of less than 5% in muscle mass. (Please see attached lay summary of this peer reviewed article.)

Opening up private spaces for women and girls to men claiming female identity creates a huge loophole for predatory men. Let's be honest: A significant proportion of the male population has, throughout history and still today, preyed on women. That is why private spaces for women to relieve themselves were necessary for women to participate in public life. It's why the UN advocates for girls in developing countries to have separate restrooms so they can go to school without being assaulted. It's why the experiment with gender neutral bathrooms at University of Toronto ended after a few weeks (males were holding cell phone cameras over stall doors to video girls showering). It's why Android and iPhone have developed apps to detect such cameras in restrooms and changing rooms. Current technology has made the protection of women from male voyeurs MORE not LESS difficult.

Proponents of males claiming female identity in women's spaces argue that no one would go to the effort of asserting a trans identity, risking censure and prejudice, just to gain access to female spaces. But no effort would really be involved. All a man would have to do is walk into a female space. Anyone who questioned him would be called a "transphobe." And that has happened in many places – women are just fearful of saying anything and getting accused of bigotry and transphobia.

Let me reiterate: I am FOR legislation to protect gays and lesbians, AND to protect all persons who do not conform to sex stereotypes, including butch lesbians, effeminate gay men, and those claiming trans identity. But trans identification should not be conflated with biological sex in law. The attached legal analysis explains the problems with the Equality Act – and how it should be amended to protect everyone.

I strongly urge you and our fellow Democrats to go back to the drawing board on this one.

Sincerely,

[type your name with signature above]