



**TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY RILEY GAINES**

**The Women's Bill of Rights - KANSAS State Legislature**

**Monday, March 6, 2023 at 1:30pm CT**

**IWV Supports Kansas Senate Bill 180**

Chairwoman Landwehr and distinguished members of the House Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Riley Gaines, and I am here today as a Spokeswoman for Independent Women's Voice to urge you to pass SB 180 —the Kansas Women's Bill of Rights.

IWV is an organization that fights for women and their loved ones by advocating for policy solutions that enhance freedom, opportunities, and well-being. And that is exactly what this bill does.

Prior to joining IWV, I was a member of the University of Kentucky Women's Swim and Dive Team where I was a 12X NCAA All-American.

In March 2022, my teammates and I were forced to compete against a biological male named Lia Thomas. Thomas was allowed to compete in the women's division after competing as a member of the University of Pennsylvania Men's Swim Team for three years where at best was ranked 462nd in the men's category. We watched in dismay as Thomas swam to a national title in the 500-yard freestyle, beating out the most impressive and accomplished female swimmers in the country, including Olympians and American record holders.

When I raced Thomas in the 200-yard freestyle, we tied. We ended up with the same time – down to the *hundredth* of a second. But that is not all.

In addition to being forced to give up our awards, our titles, and our opportunities, we female swimmers were forced to share a locker room with Thomas, a 6'4" 22-year-old biological male equipped with (and exposing) male genitalia. Let me be clear: *we were not forewarned. We were not asked for our consent. And we did not give our consent.*

Not so long ago, a decision by a university to allow such discriminatory behavior would have been understood as an obvious violation of Title IX, the 1972 law that prohibits discrimination “on the basis of sex” in education,

including college athletics. But today, unelected bureaucrats want to redefine “sex” and equate it to “gender identity.” Under this rewording, colleges and universities would be *required* to allow anyone who identifies as a woman to compete in women's sports and to undress in female changing spaces. This is literally the *opposite* of what Title IX was enacted to do.

What can states do to prevent unelected bureaucrats and judges from unlawfully turning statutes intended to *protect* women into statutes that *discriminate* against women?

They can start by passing the Women’s Bill of Rights to preserve the integrity of statutes passed to protect women and to protect *your* legislative prerogatives.

SB 180 bill does not change ANY existing laws. It merely establishes a legal definition of sex-based terms so we are all speaking a common language when it comes to the implementation of laws that are already on the books.

SB 180 is a declaration that words matter, that biology and science matter, and that, when it comes to privacy and safety, separating the sexes is not only constitutional, it’s common sense.

SB 180 won't stop this legislature from passing laws to accommodate trans-identified individuals, but it will **prevent bureaucrats and judges from erasing women's statutory rights. I urge you to pass SB 180 and I thank you for hearing my testimony today.**