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Tuesday, May 31, 2022

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UTAH FAMILIES FILE LAWSUIT CHALLENGING THE STATE'S BAN ON TRANSGENDER GIRLS PLAYING SCHOOL SPORTS

The plaintiffs are represented by the ACLU of Utah, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, and the firm Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati

SALT LAKE CITY, UT – Today, two Utah families [filed a legal challenge](#) in Utah state court against House Bill 11, which prohibits transgender girls from competing in school sports.

The law, which the Legislature enacted over Governor Spencer Cox's [veto](#), singles out transgender girls in order to exclude them from girls' sports. It bars every transgender girl from competing on a girls' team regardless of her medical care or individual circumstances.

The students included in the challenge are transgender girls who are current public-school students, love sports, and want to participate in sports with other girls. The families of these children are proceeding anonymously to protect their children. They include Jenny Roe, a 16-year-old junior in High School who wants to play volleyball her senior year and Jane Noe, a 13-year-old swimmer. If HB 11 is allowed to go into effect, these children will be barred from playing the sports they love.

"My last season playing volleyball was one of the best times of my life. I loved my teammates, felt part of something bigger than myself, and finally had a way to socialize with friends after being cooped up during the pandemic, **Jenny Roe said**. "This law devastated me. I just want to play on a team like any other kid."

"It feels like an attack on our family," **Jenny's mother, Debbie Roe** added. "Parents want their kids to be happy and to be surrounded by people who love and nurture them. This law does the opposite—it tells my daughter that she doesn't belong and that she is unworthy of having the same opportunities as other students at her school."

"As parents, we want our children to be healthy and happy," **said Jean Noe, mother of 13-year-old Jane Noe**. "My husband and I love Utah and our children have benefited from living here. This law changes all of that and we are having serious conversations, for the first time, about whether we can stay here. It is deeply unsettling that the state would want to strip our child of the love and support she has received from her teammates, coaches, and entire sports community."

"This law bans transgender girls from competing with other girls in every sport, at every grade level, and regardless of each girl's individual circumstances," said Justice **Christine Durham, former Chief Justice of the Utah Supreme Court and senior of counsel at Wilson Sonsini**. "It cannot survive constitutional scrutiny and it endangers transgender children."

By singling out transgender girls for disfavored treatment, the children and their families allege, HB 11 violates multiple provisions of the Utah Constitution.

HB 11 is one of hundreds of anti-LGBTQ bills pushed in state legislatures across the country in 2022. Health care organizations such as the **American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Psychological Association** have opposed such legislation, as has the **National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education**.

Prior to the passage of HB 11, the **Utah High School Activities Association (UHSAA)** had guidelines governing the participation of transgender students in school sports. UHSAA provided information during the legislative session that only four transgender students had even used their process and that they had not had any complaints from students, families, or school administrators. Of the 75,000 students who play high school sports in Utah, only four are transgender and only one had played on a girls' team.

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The National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) is a national legal organization committed to advancing the human and civil rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community through litigation, public policy advocacy, and public education. Since its founding, NCLR has maintained a longstanding commitment to racial and economic justice and the LGBTQ community's most vulnerable. www.nclrights.org

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