



June 10th, 2020

Dear NCAA Bid Selection Committees,

We are writing to request you relocate all NCAA events, including the 2021 NCAA Men's Basketball Championship games,¹ from Idaho due to the state's recent passage of dangerous anti-transgender legislation that prohibits certain groups of student athletes from participating in school sports.

Given Idaho's adoption of a discriminatory law that directly impacts college athletics, violates NCAA values, and undermines the dignity and well-being of NCAA athletes, Idaho schools no longer qualify to host NCAA events.

On March 30, 2020, Idaho enacted House Bill 500 (HB500), a law that bans transgender girls from competing on college teams, including at Idaho's NCAA member schools. This law also forces women and girls to be subject to invasive medical procedures simply because they are, or are suspected to be, transgender.² Idaho is the only state in the country with such an extreme, harmful, and discriminatory blanket ban on the participation of transgender women and girls in sports.³ This law is in direct conflict with NCAA Championship policies.⁴ In fact, Idaho's law is so extreme that it prompted the NCAA to speak out against its passage.⁵

Idaho's law blatantly targets an already-marginalized community in athletics and decreases their participation in sports. Transgender students already participate at significantly lower rates and feel unsafe in athletic spaces.⁶ Further, while the harm of this law explicitly falls on transgender girls, the impact extends even further. Idaho's new law is the first in the country to categorically ban transgender girls from sports statewide, but past research has found that when states adopt policies that create new barriers for transgender athletes to participate in sports, the number of participants in sports among *all* LGBTQ youth drops.⁷ This harms the NCAA's goals of protecting athlete wellbeing and promoting diversity and inclusion in athletics.

¹Boise State is slated to host the First and Second round of the 2021 NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament. Under HB500, Boise State is required to ban transgender women from women's athletics.

²This law might also permit athletes and schools in Idaho to sue the NCAA and member schools for simply allowing transgender girls to play on their team consistent with the NCAA policy.

³ HB500 would also ban many intersex women and girls from participating on women's teams due to their variations in sex characteristics.

⁴To promote fairness and inclusion, the NCAA permits transgender women to participate in sports after a specific set of requirements are met.

⁵NCAA Statement on HB500: "HB500 is harmful to transgender student-athletes and conflicts with the NCAA's core value of fair treatment of all individuals. The membership believes that transgender student-athletes should have nondiscriminatory and respectful participation opportunities on college sports teams, and we are working to understand how this law will impact college athletes in Idaho. It is our hope that all individuals will be treated with fairness and respect in athletics."

⁶ Play to Win, Human Rights Campaign, <https://www.hrc.org/resources/play-to-win-improving-the-lives-of-lgbtq-youth-in-sports>.

⁷Ibid



As a law that expressly violates the NCAA's values, HB500 disqualifies Idaho schools from hosting the seminal NCAA event. According to the NCAA's anti-discrimination policy, the NCAA "must and shall operate [their] championships and events in alignment with [their] values as [they] strive to promote an inclusive atmosphere in which student-athletes participate..."⁸ This includes NCAA Championship sessions, series, and final events. When North Carolina passed HB2 in 2016, the most extreme anti-LGBTQ law in the country at the time, the NCAA recognized that a law targeting transgender people's access to restrooms went against their values, and subsequently relocated championship games from North Carolina. Like HB2, HB500 strikes directly at the core of the NCAA's values, going even further in excluding students from college athletics. All NCAA sponsored events therefore should be removed from Idaho immediately.

Further, Idaho should not be permitted to host an NCAA event while HB500 is in effect. With this sweeping discriminatory law in place, they simply cannot reflect NCAA values and treat all athletes with the dignity and respect expected of NCAA membership schools.

We appreciate the NCAA's commitment to inclusion and anti-discrimination. In keeping with these values, we encourage you to take immediate action to ensure the integrity of NCAA events and the wellbeing of all athletes.

Sincerely,

National Center for Transgender Equality
American Civil Liberties Union
Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
National Women's Law Center
American Association of University Women
Athlete Ally
Atlanta Pride Committee
Billie Jean King Leadership Initiative
Center for American Progress
Center for Disability Rights
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
Equality California
Equality Federation
Equality North Carolina
Equality Texas
Family Equality

⁸ NCAA Championships Anti-Discrimination Policy, https://www.ncaa.org/sites/default/files/NON-DISCRIMINATION_QUESTIONNAIRE_20160722.pdf.



Feminist Majority Foundation
Fenway Health
FORGE, Inc.
Freedom for All Americans
GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality
GLSEN
Human Rights Campaign
Inclusion Playbook
Japanese American Citizens League
JustUs Health
Lambda Legal
Legal Voice
LGBTQ Allyship
Lou Weaver Consulting
Mazzoni Center
Minority Veterans of America
Modern Military Association of America
National Black Justice Coalition
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Coalition for LGBT Health
National Education Association
National Equality Action Team
National LGBTQ Task Force
National Partnership for Women & Families
NMAC
Oasis Legal Services
OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates
One Colorado
OutNebraska
PFLAG National
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
SAGE: Advocacy and Services for LGBT Elders
Silver State Equality-Nevada
SPLC Action Fund
The Trevor Project
The Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County, Inc.
Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund
Transgender Resource Center of New Mexico
True Colors United
Whitman-Walker Health and Whitman-Walker Institute
Women's Sports Foundation