

Increasing Equity in School Sports
Amendment to the Strengthening America's Schools Act of 2013
Offered by Senator Patty Murray

The Challenge

Despite the growth of female athletic participation since Title IX was enacted forty years ago, schools are providing 1.3 million fewer chances for girls to play sports in high school as compared to boys. Federal law requires colleges to make gender equity in sports information publicly available each year, but elementary and secondary schools are not required to report this data, making it hard to ensure fairness at the elementary and secondary school levels.

At the same time, we know that access to sports can have a significant positive impact on girls. Research shows girls who had opportunities to play sports have a lower risk of obesity later in life, lower rates of pregnancy, lower incidence of depression, and more positive body image compared to non-athletes. Additionally, young women who play sports are more likely to graduate from high school, have higher grades, and score higher on standardized tests than non-athletes.

The Solution

The Murray amendment will amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to ensure that schools report information on the equality of access to, funding for, and quality of girls' organized sports in elementary, middle and high schools. It will help make the information public to shine a light on the inequities that currently exist between girls' and boys' sports in participation opportunities, funding, and benefits such as equipment and coaching. The amendment requires schools to report information regarding participants on teams and overall expenditures, including items like travel expenses, equipment and uniforms.

By requiring that schools make this existing data public, we can ensure that girls all over the country have the chance not only to improve their athletic abilities, but also to develop the qualities of teamwork, discipline, and self-confidence that lead to success on and off the playing field.

Groups Supporting the Amendment

American Association of University Women
American Volleyball Coaches Association
Annie Appleseed Project
Center for Research on Physical Activity, Sport and Health, D'Youville College
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Equal Rights Advocates
Feminist Majority
Girls Inc.
Healthy Teen Network
Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health

National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Council of Women's Organizations
National Organization for Women Foundation
National Partnership for Women and Families
National Women's Law Center
Southwest Women's Law Center
The DadMan
The Myra Sadker Foundation
USA Cheer
U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce
Women's Law Project
Women's Sports Foundation