

# **S .1269, the High School Data Transparency Act of 2011**

**Sponsored by Senator Snowe and Senator Murray**

## **The Problem**

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 high schools are not required to report this data, making it hard to ensure fairness at the secondary school level.

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, as well as lower rates of pregnancy, a lower incidence of depression, and a 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 High School Data Transparency Act of 2011 would 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 middle school and high school. It will help make the information public to shine a light on the inequities that currently exist between girls' and boys' sports in staffing, funding, and even the convenience of practice times and competitions.

**The High School Sports Data Transparency Act of 2011** will make important strides in ensuring equal opportunities to females and males in sports through:

- *Data breakdown* - The High School Sports Data Transparency Act directs the Secretary of Education to collect information regarding participation in athletics broken down by gender, teams, race and ethnicity, and overall expenditures, including items like travel expenses, equipment and uniforms.
- *Data reporting*- The data required under the High School Data Transparency Act are already reported, in most cases, to the state Departments of Education and should not pose any additional burden on high schools.
- *Ensuring data is available to the public* - To ensure public access to this important information, the High School Sports Data Transparency Act would require schools to make this data available at the request of students or the public. It would also require the Department of Education to make the collected data available on the agency's website.
- *Next steps*- With this new information, we can ensure that young women all over the country have the chance not only to improve their athletic ability, but also to develop the qualities of teamwork, discipline, and self-confidence that lead to success off the playing field.