

***As author of the Legislation that Continues the Fight for Equality in Sports, Slaughter says, "we must recommit ourselves to continuing the fight for equity for women and girls."***

WASHINGTON – Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter (NY-28) today marked the 40th anniversary of the passage of the landmark Title IX legislation by introducing a resolution into the House of Representatives that honors the progress made in the 40 years since Title IX was signed into law and rededicates efforts to attain equality for women and girls in all their educational and athletic endeavors.

Title IX barred educational institutions that receive federal funding from discriminating against anyone on the basis of sex. This landmark legislation led to gains for women in all fields, from academics to business to science and technology. The law is, however, probably best known for its impact on women in athletics.

"The passage of Title IX was a truly historic and impactful moment in the ongoing struggle for equal rights for women," said Slaughter. "While we continue to engage in battles for equality every day, we can look to the successes that have resulted from Title IX as powerful examples of what we can accomplish. Since this historic law was enacted, the number of women competing in college sports has soared by more than 600 percent while the number of high school girls competing in sports increased by over 1,000 percent. Despite these victories, much work remains to be done. Today, high school girls still receive 1.3 million fewer opportunities to play sports than high school boys, and the gap is increasing. I am committed to continuing the fight for equality for women on this and every other level and will not rest until these goals are achieved. "

Slaughter is one of Congress' most prominent champions in the fight to protect and advance women. She is the author of legislation that would help high schools improve opportunities for girls in sports, and thereby encourage greater participation of both girls and boys in athletics. [H.R. 458, the High School Athletics Accountability Act](#), would require that high schools report basic data on the number of female and male students in their athletic programs and the expenditures made for their sports teams. Federal law requires colleges to make gender equity in sports information publicly available each year, but even though high schools already collect this data, they are not required to disclose it, making it difficult to ensure fairness at the secondary school level. Estimates are that producing this report would take just three to six hours per year.

"Without information about how athletic opportunities and benefits are being allocated at the high school level, female students may be deprived of their chance to participate in athletics," said Slaughter. "We know that participation in sports has a multitude of positive effects – immediate and long-term – on young women and girls, both physically and socially. Student athletes tend to graduate at higher rates, perform better in school, are less likely to use drugs and alcohol, and are less likely to become pregnant. Further, for many young women, sports are often their ticket to higher education through athletic scholarships. I've met with so many Olympic gold medalists that told me without Title IX, which gave them access to athletic scholarships, they never would have had the chance to go to college. My legislation ensures that women have equal access to these important resources."

[Text of Slaughter's resolution can be found here.](#) Her statement that was inserted into the Congressional Record can be found below.

[For more on Slaughter's leadership standing up for women, click here.](#)

### **Slaughter's Statement for the Congressional Record**

M. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution recognizing the 40th anniversary of the momentous Title IX legislation. Forty years ago, on June 23, 1972, it was established that educational institutions receiving federal funding were barred from discriminating against anyone on the basis of sex. That decision applied to student admissions, recruitment, scholarship awards and tuition assistance, housing, access to courses and other academic offerings, counseling, financial assistance, employment assistance to students, health and insurance benefits and services, athletics, and all aspects of education-related employment.

This landmark legislation led to gains for women in all fields, from academics to business to science and technology. The law is probably most well known for its impact on women in athletics. Since Title IX was enacted, the number of women competing in college sports has soared by more than 600 percent, and the number of high school girls competing in sports has

increased by over 1,000 percent.

This is important because we know from scientific research that student athletes graduate at higher rates, perform better in school and are less likely to use drugs and alcohol, smoke, or develop mental illness or obesity later in life. Furthermore, I have heard from countless female athletes, like Olympic gymnast Dominique Dawes, that without athletic scholarships made possible by Title IX, they simply would not have been able to attend college. Imagine the vast intellectual, cultural and athletic opportunities that would have been lost to these young women had they not been able to pursue their goals of furthering their education.

In the years since the law was passed, we have had to fight for improvements to the legislation and fight against other attempts to weaken it. In 2003, I led a hearing in the basement of this very Capitol building when Title IX was being threatened by Commission for Opportunity in Athletic recommendations that ignored the continuing lack of participation opportunities and funding that women's and girls' athletics were facing. I clearly recall watching a line of little girls in their soccer uniforms enter the room accompanied by their fathers. These dads spoke eloquently about the importance of coaching their daughters in sports, and how it meant just as much to them as coaching their sons. Although bad policy was enacted that limited the effectiveness Title IX, I am proud to say we were able to reverse significant parts of that in 2010.

The fight for fairness continues. Today we still face disparities in opportunities for girls in sports, particularly at the high school level. Girls make up half of the high school population, yet receive only 41% of all athletic participation opportunities. This translates to 1.3 million fewer opportunities for young women to play high school sports than young men. Worse yet, this gap is actually increasing.

How is it that one law can have such a dramatic impact at one age level and yet be less successful for our young women who are just four years younger? The answer can be found in public transparency and accountability. As is true elsewhere in life, sunshine can be the best of disinfectants.

At the collegiate level, colleges and universities are required to publicly account for how their athletic opportunities, resources, and dollars are allocated among male and female athletes. No such transparency requirements are found at the high school level. Not surprisingly, where there is no public accountability, there is a growing gap in athletic opportunities for young

student-athletes.

Currently, high schools are required to submit annual reports of their athletic participation numbers by sport and gender to their state high school athletic associations. Additionally, school bookkeepers already keep records of all school expenditures—including those made within the athletic department. Despite doing all the work of collecting this data, none of it is required to be made public.

To make a simple, but profound, change to high school reporting requirements, I have authored H.R. 458, the High School Athletics and Accountability Act. This bill would require high schools to make public vital data on the participation of girls in high school sports. Schools already collect this data. Making the information public would be a small change for school administrators – estimates are that it would take just three to six hours of time once a year to produce a report – and would have a huge impact on the opportunities available to our young girls.

As we celebrate the anniversary of the passage of this landmark legislation, we must recommit ourselves to continuing the fight for equity for women and girls. I ask my colleagues to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Title IX with me, and pledge to keep pressing forward until opportunities are equal for all.