

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 542

Supporting the observation of “National Girls & Women in Sports Day” on February 7, 2024, to raise awareness of and celebrate the achievements of girls and women in sports.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 5, 2024

Ms. BUTLER (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. ROSEN, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

RESOLUTION

Supporting the observation of “National Girls & Women in Sports Day” on February 7, 2024, to raise awareness of and celebrate the achievements of girls and women in sports.

Whereas “National Girls & Women in Sports Day” began in 1987 as a day to recognize and acknowledge the success and progress of girls and women in sports;

Whereas athletic participation helps develop self-discipline, initiative, confidence, and leadership skills, and opportunities for athletic participation should be available to all individuals;

Whereas, because the people of the United States remain committed to protecting equality, it is imperative to eliminate the existing disparities between male and female youth athletic programs;

Whereas the share of athletic participation opportunities of high school girls has increased more than sixfold since the enactment of title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.) (referred to in this preamble as “title IX”), but high school girls still experience—

(1) a lower share of athletic participation opportunities than high school boys; and

(2) a lower level of athletic participation opportunities than high school boys enjoyed over 50 years ago;

Whereas 60 percent of high school girls participate in a sport;

Whereas the share of women participating in college sports has nearly tripled since the enactment of title IX, but female college athletes still comprise only 44 percent of the total collegiate athlete population, 30 percent of whom are White women and only 14 percent of whom are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (referred to in this preamble as “BIPOC”) women;

Whereas, in 1971, women coached 90 percent of collegiate women’s teams, but as of 2024, women coach only 41.2 percent of all National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as “NCAA”) women’s teams and BIPOC women represent only 7 percent of head coaches;

Whereas there is a need to restore women to those positions to ensure fair representation and provide role models for young female athletes;

Whereas, for too long, the many achievements of women in sports have not received fair recognition;

Whereas the long history of women in sports in the United States—

(1) features many contributions made by female athletes that have enriched the national life of the United States; and

(2) includes inspiring figures, such as Billie Jean King, Flo Hyman, Gertrude Ederle, Wilma Rudolph, Althea Gibson, Mildred Ella “Babe” Didrikson Zaharias, Mary Lou Retton, and Patty Berg, whose stories and adversity faced have helped strengthen women sports by—

(A) advancing participation by women in sports;

and

(B) setting positive examples for the generations of female athletes who continue to inspire people in the United States today;

Whereas the United States must do all it can to break down the barriers of discrimination, inequality, and injustice in sports;

Whereas girls and young women in minority communities are doubly disadvantaged because—

(1) schools in minority communities have fewer athletic opportunities than schools in predominately White communities; and

(2) the limited resources for athletic opportunities in minority communities exacerbates the existing gender inequity between girls and boys;

Whereas the 4-time World Cup champion United States Women’s National Soccer Team has led the fight domestically and internationally for equal treatment and compensation for female athletes;

Whereas United States women athletes will compete on the world stage in 2024 at the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics;

Whereas, with the recent enactment of laws such as the Equal Pay for Team USA Act of 2022 (Public Law 117–340), Congress has taken steps—

(1) to ensure all athletes representing the United States in global competition receive equal pay and benefits regardless of gender; and

(2) to represent to the world, and especially young girls, that everyone deserves equal pay and benefits; and

Whereas, with increased participation by women and girls in sports, it is more important than ever to continue protecting title IX and uphold the mandate of the law of equitable and fair treatment and more general principles of gender equity throughout the sport system: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate supports—

2 (1) observing “National Girls & Women in
3 Sports Day” on February 7, 2024, to recognize—

4 (A) all women athletes who represent
5 schools, universities, and the United States in
6 their athletic pursuits; and

1 (B) the vital role that the people of the
2 United States have in empowering girls and
3 women in sports;

4 (2) marking the observation of National Girls &
5 Women in Sports Day with appropriate programs
6 and activities, including legislative efforts—

7 (A) to build on the success of the Equal
8 Pay for Team USA Act of 2022 (Public Law
9 117–340) and ensure equal pay for all female
10 athletes; and

11 (B) to protect and uphold title IX of the
12 Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C.
13 1681 et seq.) so that future generations of ath-
14 letes will not have to experience the inequitable
15 and unfair treatment that many athletes have
16 had to endure, and continue to endure, today;
17 and

18 (3) all ongoing efforts—

19 (A) to promote gender equity in sports, in-
20 cluding equal pay and equal access to athletic
21 opportunities for girls and women; and

22 (B) to support the commitment of the
23 United States to expanding athletic participa-

1 tion for all girls and future generations of
2 women athletes.

