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**Chris Balkema**  
(<https://www.senatorchrisbalkema.com>)

**ILLINOIS STATE SENATOR**  
**53RD DISTRICT**

Contact Senator Balkema  
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📅 April 23, 2025(<https://www.senatorchrisbalkema.com/2025/04/23/>)

**Senator Balkema Requests  
Federal Guidance to Protect  
Fairness in Women's Sports**



Members of the Illinois Senate Republican Caucus, including State Senator Chris Balkema (R-Channahon) sent a letter to U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi requesting federal guidance to ensure fairness in girls' and women's athletics in Illinois high schools. The letter follows conflicting guidance from state agencies and growing concerns about how to uphold the intent of Title IX in the wake of recent federal actions.

The letter was signed by every member of the Senate Republican Caucus, underscoring the unified support behind efforts to protect opportunities for female athletes in Illinois.

"The current Illinois rules are subjective and do not provide protection to underage girls and women," stated Senator Balkema. "Instead, the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) leaves uncertainty regarding who will be in girl's locker rooms and who women will be competing against in their sports."

Recently, the IHSA responded to a letter from Republican lawmakers who asked how the association plans to protect opportunities for female athletes. In its response, the IHSA revealed that the Illinois Attorney General and the Department of Human Rights have directed the organization to permit athletes to compete based on gender identity — a stance the IHSA says could conflict with federal law.

In their letter to Attorney General Bondi, Republican senators ask for clarification on how Illinois schools and athletic associations should respond to President Trump's February 5 Executive Order, titled "Keeping Men Out of Women's Sports." The order directs federal agencies to interpret Title IX consistent with its original intent—protecting single-sex athletic competition for biological females.

The lawmakers are seeking answers to the following:

- Whether Illinois' current position permitting biological males to compete in girls' sports violates federal law.
- If that position places the state at risk of losing federal education funding or facing legal action from the Department of Justice.
- What steps must Illinois take to align with both the Executive Order and Title IX.

The IHSA's written response underscored the legal confusion facing schools:

"The [Illinois] Attorney General ('AG') and, more recently, the Illinois Department of Human Rights ('IDHR') have asserted to the IHSA that the Illinois Human Rights Act requires that transgender athletes be permitted to participate in events and programs aligning with the gender with which they identify... Compliance with the Executive Order could place IHSA out of compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act and vice versa."

The association concluded by encouraging state and federal officials to work together to provide clear, coordinated guidance.

In the letter to Bondi, the caucus also cited legal actions already underway in other states. The U.S. Department of Justice has acted in Maine, California, and Minnesota—arguing that allowing biological males to compete in girls' sports may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX and violate federal funding agreements.

A copy of the letter sent to Attorney General Bondi is available here (<https://www.senatorchrisbalkema.com/letter-to-attorney-general-bondi/>).

## Quick Links:

Register to Vote(<https://ova.elections.il.gov/>)

Visit the Capitol([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kk\\_BQbcrVe4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kk_BQbcrVe4))

53rd District IDOT ([https://idot.illinois.gov/Assets/uploads/files/Transportation-Road Projects System/Reports/OP&P/HIP/2023-2028/ilsenate/sdist53.pdf](https://idot.illinois.gov/Assets/uploads/files/Transportation-Road%20Projects%20System/Reports/OP&P/HIP/2023-2028/ilsenate/sdist53.pdf))

Concealed Carry Handbook(<https://www.ispfsb.com/Public/CCL.aspx>)

How to File a Witness Slip Online(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQ1PbTuR7Fk>)

Helpful Links for Veterans(<https://senatorbarickman.com/veterans-resources/>)

2024 Legislation

Approved by the General Assembly (<https://www.senatorchrisbalkema.com/2024/12/17/legislation-passed-by-the-general-assembly-in-2024/>)

New Laws Jan 2025 (<https://www.senatorchrisbalkema.com/2025/01/02/new-laws-taking-effect-jan-1st-2025/>)

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