HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 297 FILED ON: 1/8/2025

HOUSE . . . . . No. 584

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

John R. Gaskey

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to ensure fairness and safety in school sports.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
John R. Gaskey	*2nd Plymouth*	*1/8/2025*
Katie Ferriera-Aubin	*50 Winter St, Rehoboth, MA 02769*	*1/8/2025*
Justin Thurber	*5th Bristol*	*1/8/2025*
Marc T. Lombardo	*22nd Middlesex*	*1/23/2025*
Steven George Xiarhos	*5th Barnstable*	*1/25/2025*
Donald R. Berthiaume, Jr.	*5th Worcester*	*2/10/2025*
Nicholas A. Boldyga	*3rd Hampden*	*2/10/2025*
Steven S. Howitt	*4th Bristol*	*3/1/2025*

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By Representative Gaskey of Carver, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 584) of John R. Gaskey and others relative to sports teams at public schools. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

An Act to ensure fairness and safety in school sports.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 71of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting the following section: -

Section 1E.

(a) No public school shall require any student athlete on a single-sex sports team to participate in a match, or any part thereof, against an opposing team that includes one or more athletes of the opposite sex. No penalty, including but not limited to loss of playing time or loss of starting status, shall be imposed by a public school on such a student athlete for refusing to play in such a match.

(b) No coach of a single-sex public school sports team shall be penalized by that school for forfeiting a match against an opposing team because such opposing team includes one or more athletes of the opposite sex.

(c) The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, or any equivalent school organization or an entity or board that provides athletic officials, including, but not limited to, referees and umpires, for school sports or athletic events shall not penalize any public school, single-sex public school sports team, coach of such a team, or student athlete on such a team, for forfeiting or refusing to play in a match against an opposing team because such opposing team includes one or more athletes of the opposite sex, except that such a forfeit may be recorded as a loss.

For the purposes of this section, a "single-sex team" is any team that is designated as either a girls' team or a boys' team, as opposed to a team that is designated as co-ed.