

## Hold High Schools Accountable for Enforcing Title IX



February 8, 2007

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the more than 100,000 bipartisan members of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), we encourage you to become a cosponsor of the ***High School Athletics Accountability Act***, introduced by Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY), which 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.

The importance of reporting data related to athletics gets at the heart of Title IX enforcement. Women are now actively participating in collegiate sports in large part due the requirements of accountability provided under the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act of 1994, requiring colleges and universities to account for how their athletics opportunities, resources, and dollars were allocated among male and female athletes. This reporting requirement accounts, in large part, for the narrowing of the athletics gap at the college level. While women's athletics continue to lag behind men both in opportunities to participate and in dollars spent, women's athletic participation has increased by 403% since 1971, proving that interest follows opportunity.

It has been a significant drawback to Title IX enforcement that no such accountability requirement exists at the high school level. The Department of Education has not set forth regulations to guide the enforcement of Title IX in high schools, and these schools are not required to report opportunity and funding statistics to any higher authority. As a result, high school girls are being deprived of the critical opportunity to play sports. Statistics have shown that teenage female athletes are less likely to smoke, to use marijuana, alcohol, cocaine, or other illicit drugs; they are also less likely to be suicidal, and are more likely to have a positive body image than female non-athletes.

The benefits girls receive from participating in sports can lead to success in all aspects of life. By cosponsoring the ***High School Athletics Accountability Act***, you would be taking the first step to ensure that future generations of girls will be afforded the opportunities that all athletes deserve. If you have further questions, please contact me at 202/785-7720.

Sincerely,



Lisa M. Maatz  
Director of Public Policy and Government Relations