



# Trans Inclusion in Sport: Response to Alberta's Anti-Transgender Policy Bill 29

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# Alberta's Bill 29 - "Fairness and Safety in Sport Act"

The Government of Alberta, The Fairness and Safety in Sport Act, associated regulations:



**Require in-scope organizations to create athlete eligibility policies and identify processes to ensure eligibility**



**Require regular reporting on complaints and concerns regarding athlete eligibility**



**Ensure transgender athletes are able to meaningfully participate in the sports of their choice by creating and expanding co-ed divisions for athletic competitions, where numbers warrant**

# What does Bill 29 do?



## Point #1

Tasks organizations with excluding transgender and gender-diverse people from fairly and equitably participating in sport.



## Point #2

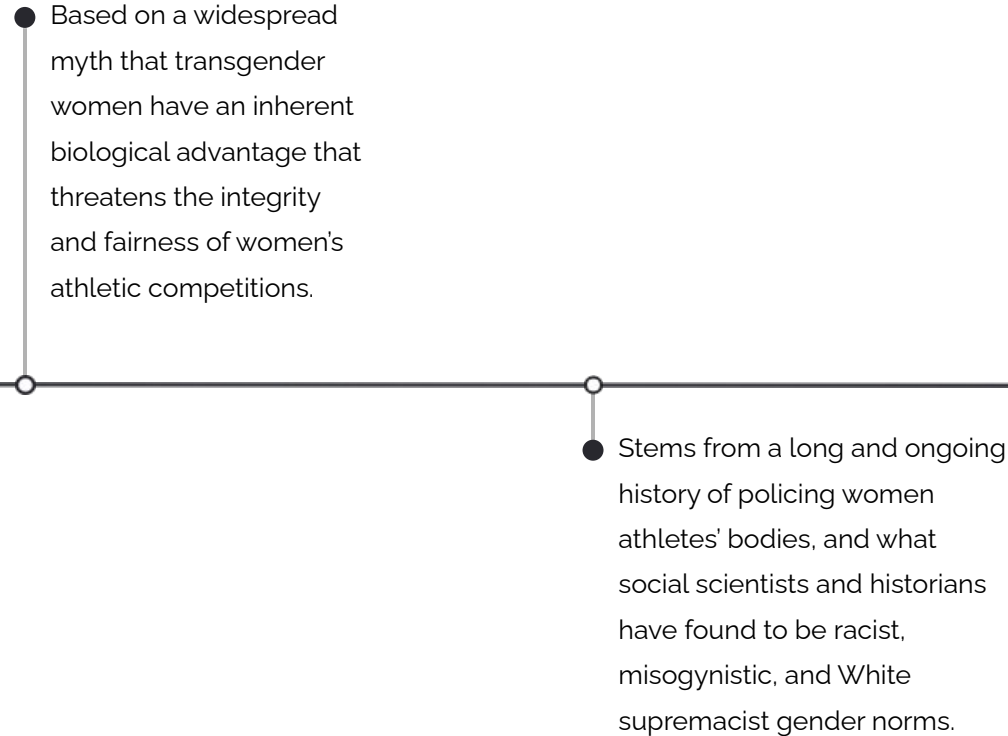
Prevent transgender people (and others) from taking legal action against the government, institutions or individuals responsible for implementing discriminatory requirements.



## Point #3

Enables gender policing and empowers anti-trans discrimination


# History of gender policing in sport



● Based on a widespread myth that transgender women have an inherent biological advantage that threatens the integrity and fairness of women's athletic competitions.

● Stems from a long and ongoing history of policing women athletes' bodies, and what social scientists and historians have found to be racist, misogynistic, and White supremacist gender norms.

# Current political climate:



Trans people targeted as a “culture wars” issue

One of 3 anti-trans bills introduced in Alberta- the others targeting healthcare access, and education

Targeting of trans and perceived as gender nonconforming athletes around the world

- Reflections on current political climate and anti-trans discrimination
- Stories of perseverance, the importance of representation, and joy
- Reflections on how trans and nonbinary presence and visibility differs sport-to-sport
- Need for greater education, intersectional understanding, trans inclusion in sport

# TRANSATHLETICS TEACH-IN

featuring

EB CAMPBELL  
NATIONAL-LEVEL  
TRAMPOLINE GYMNAST



JESSICA PLATT  
RETIRED PROFESSIONAL  
HOCKEY PLAYER



VALENTINA PETRILLO  
PARALYMPIAN



RYDER RICHARD  
SLEDGE HOCKEY PLAYER & COACH



EVA BOŠNJAK  
EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION  
PRACTITIONER



Online Panel  
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 8TH 2024  
1pm-3pm MST

Register for in-person viewing at MRU:

Register to join via Zoom:

SPACE IS LIMITED.




2S/LGBTQ+ HEALTH  
HUB

CRITICAL  
queer + trans research hub

MOUNT ROYAL UNIVERSITY  
Faculty of Health, Community  
and Education

**“A glimmer of hope I got was seeing Harrison Brown come out in the NWHL as a trans man and the support and acceptance that he got that showed me that there was a possibility that I could potentially come out and be supported and have acceptance and play the game that I love [...] that I could come out and be unburdened.”**

JESSICA PLATT, retired professional hockey player

**“We have a lot of trans people in roller derby and I think it boils down to the knowledge that we are allowed to be there. There are two leagues in roller derby: the women’s association and the men’s association. But both of them have exceptionally open categories. The women’s one says, women and nonbinary people, but I’ve heard it explained as if you feel like you should be here, you should be here. And men’s is the same.”**

EB CAMPBELL, national-level trampoline gymnast



**“I learned society is more ready to include [transgender] people, than the sporting institutions [policies] are... I've asked journalists to change the way they share our [transgender] stories... Me being here [Paralympics] is more important than any medal... I don't want to talk about discrimination anymore”**

VALENTINA PETRILLO, Paralympian



## Postsecondary Climate- TransAthletics Study at MRU

World Cafe (focus group) held in November 2025 and  
ongoing 1:1 interviews

12 participants so far- people who have engaged with  
MRU athletics and/or recreation. Including faculty,  
staff, students, community members.

# Postsecondary Climate- MRU World Cafe

1. What is the current state of knowledge regarding trans inclusion in sport among MRU community members involved in athletics and recreation?

- General lack of knowledge regarding trans inclusion

- General lack of knowledge regarding any efforts towards trans inclusion

- Receiving messages of general inclusion but no specificity

- The role of visual cues and (lack of) representation in informing participants' perceptions and senses of safety

"I also don't know anything about it [signs of trans presence]. I do look for it- but yeah, couldn't tell you."

# Postsecondary Climate- MRU World Cafe

## 2. What is working well at MRU in terms of supporting trans inclusion in athletics and recreation?

- Co-ed intramurals - run by students

- Allyship from some staff

- Increased gender diversity among staff-  
however support for these staff is also needed

“[It] can be hard to work around when you're working in this industry but not feeling safe yourself yet.”

# Postsecondary Climate- MRU World Cafe

## 3. What more can the MRU community do to support trans inclusion in sport?

- Provide greater institutional support: there are people who want to do the work, but there are limitations

- Increase “baseline education” among relevant staff- e.g., using pronouns; not using binary language (e.g., at swim classes)

“They exist [people who want to do the work]. It’s just tricky with our political climate here.”

# Postsecondary Climate- MRU World Cafe



- Understand “safety” as not only physical but also psychological and emotional
- Increase “baseline education” among relevant staff- e.g., using pronouns; not using binary language (e.g., at swim classes)



## **Direct more resources to trans and nonbinary inclusion efforts, including in recreation programming**

"Some of my friends who wanted to come with me to the classes just didn't feel comfortable. Whether the classes were intimidating, whether the classes felt gender conforming, whether the classes just felt like, I don't know, too heteronormative. They just didn't feel like they fit in that atmosphere."

"[speaking about 1 hour 2SLGBTQIA+ swim time] What is the cost of that, [just] one hour."



- Increase knowledge among staff of policies they have to fall back on, creating a greater sense of collective safety

“Knowing what you’re allowed to do explicitly is very useful.”

- The institution needs to not only recognize trans athletes, but also be accountable to them

“If you’re going to have values of inclusion or statements of inclusion you need to have action on that at all levels.”



## ***TransAthletics***

### **Seeking Research Participants**

Researchers at MRU are seeking volunteers to participate in

**1:1 interviews about trans inclusion in athletics and recreation at Mount Royal University.**

This research aims to learn about what is working well and how trans and nonbinary people can be better included.

**You are eligible to participate if you have engaged with MRU varsity or recreation in any way.**

This includes as:

someone using the recreation facilities; a participant in intramurals; a varsity athlete; a staff or faculty member; a Cougars fan.

**Research interviews are confidential and will take about 30 minutes.**

Interviews will be conducted by faculty Gio Dolcecore, Celeste Pang, or Marty Clark, or co-investigator Eva Bosnjak.

**To learn more or volunteer email [gdolcecore@mtroyal.ca](mailto:gdolcecore@mtroyal.ca)**

This study has received HREB approval.

## Next Steps

- 1. Currently conducting 1:1 interviews**
- 2. Monitoring developments in implementation of Bill 29**
- 3. Expanding to an Alberta-wide provincial study of how trans and nonbinary people who play sports, and professional working in relevant institutions, are impacted and responding to Bill 29**



THE CONVERSATION



QCRITICAL

queer + trans research hub





## Contact Information

### Emails:

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