

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Rep. Riemer's Statement in Opposition to Anti-Transgender Legislation

Madison – Representative Daniel Riemer released the following statement in opposition to the introduction of legislation that discriminates against transgender children:

“Long before I was a state legislator, I worked with kids as a youth soccer coach. I was always amazed by how tough kids can be—when they get knocked down, they get up again and keep playing. Kids are resilient, fearless, and brave. But kids also need to be supported and built up. Childhood is a difficult time, when all kids struggle to fit in, to find themselves, and to make their way in the world. As a coach, I always felt that I could play a small but meaningful part in their lives through sports. Sports help kids learn discipline, hard work, and sacrifice. Sports teach kids to win graciously. Sports help kids learn to cope with loss. Defeat in a game prepares a child to cope with the harder disappointments, failures, and losses that are an inevitable part of life.

“That is why the bill that would segregate student sports according to what the bill’s authors describe as “the sex assigned at birth by a physician” hurts so much. It hurts me as a former coach who always loved to see kids participate fully and joyfully in sports, regardless of any criteria that might otherwise matter off the field. It hurts me as a father, who hopes my child will play until his legs are tired and his heart is full. It hurts me as a lawmaker, who hears in this bill the echoes of a darker time in our history where sinister laws were enforced to exclude, degrade, and demean. I sincerely hope that Governor Evers will veto this hateful legislation. I am confident that he would do just that. This bill has no right to become law. I urge my colleagues not to support this odious legislation.

“But even though this bill will never become law in Wisconsin, the damage it was intended to cause has already been done. It seeks to divide our community by segregating children based on rules imposed by politicians. It has brought pain to the families of transgender children. Even though it will not become the law, it is a form of cruelty.

“The victims of that cruelty are children. Children like one of my constituents, Wade, an Intersex trans child. Wade’s parents reached out to me to let me know how hurtful this proposal has been to their family. Wade was born with congenital adrenal hyperplasia and is Intersex. Wade is eight years old and is a massive fan of the comic book character Deadpool. If I were still coaching soccer, I would want Wade on my team. Wade should be able to play sports free from humiliation or segregation.

“The authors of this bill should ask themselves: where can kids like Wade play sports in our schools if their bill becomes the law? How will kids like Wade fit in if their bill becomes a reality? This bill discriminates against him. It segregates Wade from his teammates. It tells him: “there is no place for you here.” That is wrong.

“The 7th Assembly District in the State of Wisconsin supports and loves our transgender neighbors. They matter. They will always have a place on our team.”

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