




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MIRANI

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MOTION

Women in Sport

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (5.21 pm): At the outset I would say that people in this House who know me know that I have a lot of friends in the staff and as I walk around this place I speak to everyone on a daily basis. I treat no-one any different. I have no phobias towards anyone and a lot of people will tell you that. It does not matter where I am in my community, I am the same. It does not matter where I am in the cities, I am the same. I help and treat everyone the same. We want an inclusive egalitarian society in Queensland. We want equality and no discrimination and every Queenslander to have equal access to life services and work, and that is certainly what I want.

Sport is about physical ability. I am not saying that anyone has less or more physical ability, but we are built different when it comes to situations in sport. Take, for instance, the weight of boxers. We are not going to put an 18-stone man up against a nine-stone man or do that for a women's fight or any type of fight for that matter, no matter the sex or what people want to be. The situation is that males on average are stronger, taller and faster and the outcome will be unfair and discriminatory to women, and it was only just recently that a lady wrote that in the *Daily Mercury* in Mackay.

Many feel like they are being bullied and attacked into silence too. They are not the only ones. Pretty much everyone is too afraid to speak out in some situations in today's world because they risk losing sponsorships and opportunities, jobs and even relationships. It has become a difficult situation for most people, but the biggest thing we need to do is preserve sport for everyone to participate in equally and fairly across the board. I have two daughters. Regardless of whatever their choice is in life, if they can compete fairly so be it.

If someone does not stand up for the rights of these people—either way—the outcome is that there will eventually be no women's sport at all. The consequences, in other words, will be the end of opportunities for some women and girls in sports. They may feel that they cannot compete on certain levels. It is vital therefore that the integrity of women's competitions in Queensland be preserved and that we stand up for the rights of any female athletes who will be discriminated against by allowing any sort of women or men who identify as whoever they identify as in their sporting competitions. No matter how hard they trained or how hard they push themselves, they would be beaten, and most of the ladies are saying that. As I said, there is a lady in Mackay in the latest paper saying the same thing. Should we go against their wishes? Whose wishes are right and whose wishes are wrong? They are just coming from their own point of view. Everyone should have the chance to participate in sport, but they need to participate on a level playing field.

Mr Dametto interjected.

Mr ANDREW: I take the interjection. This is not about politics; it is about women's right to compete fairly and women's right to win. Female athletes deserve the same opportunity as males to excel and chase their dreams. The integrity of women's sport must be protected, as I said earlier. This is simply about making sure that women can safely compete and have the same opportunities as men to excel

in the sport that they have trained for. Any other gender that wants it should have that opportunity as well. It is not about wanting to discriminate against anybody; it is solely about women having the opportunity to compete and win in women's sport. As the father of two young girls, it gives me great pleasure to put those facts out there.