

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 98-4686, by Representatives Mitchell, Carlson, Cooper, Keiser, Kastama, Mason, Regala, Tokuda, Doumit, Quall, Gombosky, K. Schmidt, Ballasiotes, Radcliff, Robertson, Costa, Huff, Talcott and Hankins

WHEREAS, Athletics is one of the most effective ways for girls and women in the United States to develop leadership skills, self-discipline, initiative, and confidence; and

WHEREAS, Sports and fitness activity contribute to emotional and physical well-being and increased self-esteem, and develop strong bodies; and

WHEREAS, The communication and cooperation skills learned through athletic experience play a key role in the contributions of athletes to the home, to the workplace, and to society; and

WHEREAS, Early motor skills training and enjoyable experiences of physical activity strongly influence life-long habits of physical fitness; and

WHEREAS, The bonds built among women through athletics help break down the social barriers of racism and prejudice; and

WHEREAS, Although the history of women in sports is rich and long, there has been little national recognition of the significance of the athletic achievements of women; and

WHEREAS, The state of Washington has been a leader in the fight for gender equity in athletics by passing legislation making it illegal to discriminate against girls' and women's sports; and

WHEREAS, The state of Washington has produced such winning women athletes as Olympic skier Debbie Armstrong, ice skater Rosalynn Summers, track star Doris Heritage, swimmer Mary Wayte, synchronized swimmer Tracie Ruiz-Conforto, marathon runner Lisa Weidenbach, soccer player Shannon Higgins, boxer Dallas Malloy, and rower Karen Kraft, whose spirit, talent, and accomplishments distinguished them from others and were a source of inspiration and pride to all of us; and

WHEREAS, Women's sports are beginning to receive state and national attention through professional sports teams such as the Seattle Reign in the American Basketball League; and

WHEREAS, There is still a large gap between men's and women's professional sports teams, as well as salaries and endorsements; and

WHEREAS, The number of women in the leadership positions of coaches, officials, and administrators has declined drastically over the past decade, and there is a need to restore women to these positions to ensure fair representation of the abilities of women and to provide role models for young female athletes; and

WHEREAS, Historically, women athletic coaches, officials, and administrators have not received the same recognition as their male counterparts, and women in sports are still fighting an uphill battle for acceptance and striving to receive equal compensation for excelling in their field; and

WHEREAS, Athletic opportunities for male high school and college students remain significantly greater than athletic opportunities for female students; and

WHEREAS, The number of funded research projects focusing on the specific needs of women athletes is limited, and the information provided by the projects is imperative to the health and performance of future women athletes;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That February 6, 1998, be designated as Washington State Girls and Women in Sports Day.

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