Title IX:
The First 50 Years

Lisa A. Brown
Jackie Gharapour Wernz
Thompson & Horton LLP
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A Page in History

In 1964, Congress passed landmark civil rights legislation. Title VI addressed discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, and color in programs receiving federal money. Title VII addressed employment discrimination.

Rep. Martha Wright Griffiths lobbied to add "sex discrimination" to Title VII. The chamber laughed. Griffiths responded: "I presume that if there had been any necessity to point out that women were a second-class sex, the laughter would have proved it." The chamber fell silent. "Sex" was later added to Title VII.

Source: https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/14160



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Legislators unsuccessfully sought to add "sex" to Title VI. Sponsors eventually prepared a bill that focused solely on sex discrimination in education. Rep. Patsy T. Mink sponsored the initial legislation that became Title IX, while Rep. Edith Starrett Green steered the bill through the legislative process. As chair of the House subcommittee on higher education, Green presided over seven days of hearings in which witnesses described discrimination against women in education. She set the tone for the proceedings, declaring: "Let us not deceive ourselves. Our educational institutions have proven to be no bastions of democracy."

Source: https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/14080; https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/18329



Rep. Mink



Rep. Green

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"The field of education is just one of many areas where differential treatment [between men and women] has been documented but because education provides access to jobs and financial security, discrimination here is doubly destructive for women. Therefore, a strong and comprehensive measure is needed to provide women with solid legal protection from the persistent, pernicious discrimination which is serving to perpetuate second-class citizenship for American women." Sen. Birch Bayh, sponsor of Title IX in the U.S. Senate.

Source: 118 Cong. Rec. 5803, 5806-07 (1972).

In the Congress of the United States

Congress adopted Title IX on June 23, 1972:

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

20 U.S.C. § 1681

Title IX: Before and After

In 1971, approximately 14.1% of men obtained a four-year college degree, while just 8.2% of women obtained a four-year degree. In 2019, 36.7% of men and 38.3% of women obtained a four-year degree.

Since passage of Title IX, participation by girls in athletics has grown by 1,057 percent.

Before Title IX, most law schools limited admission to a dozen or so women. In 2018, females made up 52% of all students in ABA-approved law schools.

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