

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023

*Dear Constance,*

**RE: EQUALITY ACT 2010 (BIOLOGICAL SEX MATTERS CAMPAIGN)**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of updating the *Equality Act* to specify that any reference to sex means a person's biological sex. I have read your comments with interest.

Thank you also for your kind invitation to attend the Westminster Hall debate, relating to the definition of "sex" in the *Equality Act 2010*, held on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023. Unfortunately, owing to prior, longstanding diary commitments, I was unable to attend, although please rest assured that I will continue to follow the issues raised closely.

The current guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) on existing legislation says that it is entirely acceptable for providers of single-sex services to take account of the biological sex of their service users. Where it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, the *Equality Act 2010* is clear that service providers can exclude, modify, or limit, access for transgender people, even where they have a Gender Recognition Certificate. This includes where a service provider has concerns that the presence of individuals who are biologically male could prevent them from meeting their aims, such as in the example below, included in the guidance: "*A group counselling session is provided for female victims of sexual assault. The organisers do not allow trans women to attend as they judge that the clients who attend the group session are likely to be traumatised by the presence of a person who is biologically male.*"

I can assure you that the Government is committed to protecting women's rights and the Minister for Women and Equalities regularly seeks advice from the independent equality regulator as part of her role. The department has received advice from the EHRC on the *Equality Act* and, I understand, will consider this in the usual way.

I can assure you that the Government is committed to maintaining the safeguards that allow organisations to provide single-sex spaces. It is crucial that the principle of being able to operate spaces reserved for women and girls is maintained.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes,*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT**  
**CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**