

Dear Members of the Commission on the Status of Women,

I am deeply concerned about how the gender identity movement is impacting the human rights of women and girls. This is currently occurring globally, and many feminist groups from around the world are organizing to highlight the risks to women and girls.

I live in the United States. In the US girls in school are losing the rights to privacy and safety in bathrooms and locker rooms. A generation of girls are being taught that they have no right to question any male who intrudes upon what were previously single-sex spaces. They no longer can be assured that their sports teams are single sex.

In women's domestic violence and homeless shelters, women are now expected to share intimate living spaces with males who identify as transgender.

In women's prisons, several states are issuing directives that transgender-identified males be placed in women's prisons. This is occurring in California and Washington, and is set to occur in New Jersey and Maine. There are reports of women being assaulted by these males. Housing men and women in the same prison facilities violates Rule 11 of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. Also, while the Geneva Convention articles do not apply outside of armed conflict, its principles should guide fair and civilized treatment of prisoners.

The majority of women in shelters and prisons have experienced abuse at the hands of males. How is it remotely reasonable to expect women to heal and move on with their lives when they are not even guaranteed the rights to single-sex environments in which to do so.

As a recently retired Clinical Social Worker who entered the field in order to work to help girls and women recover from sexual abuse and assault, and dating and domestic abuse, I am appalled at how many governments and organizations are disregarding the rights of women and girls in favor of males who say they 'feel' like women and girls. The feelings of an extremely small percentage of males should never take precedence over the safety and well-being of one half of the world's population.

Please consult the Women's Human Rights Campaign, WHRC, which has chapters in countries all over the world (website: <https://www.womensdeclaration.com/en/about/>), as well as WHRC USA (website: <https://www.womensdeclaration.com/en/country-info/united-states-america/>), both of which have excellent information detailing women's grave concerns.

I ask you to find the courage to address this growing problem.

Thank you,

Patricia Cooney
United States