



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Rachel Gary**

**Women's Sports Foundation**

**(201) 615-9629**

[RGary@WomensSportsFoundation.org](mailto:RGary@WomensSportsFoundation.org)

## **Women's Sports Foundation Responds today's Supreme Court's decision regarding Michigan High School Athletic Association's scheduling of girls sports:**

The Women's Sports Foundation applauds the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court today to deny certiorari (review of) the Communities for Equity v. Michigan High School Athletic Association's (MHSAA) Sixth Circuit decision. That decision found the MHSAA guilty of discrimination against female high school athletes by scheduling regular and post-season championship competition in six girls' sports, but no boys' sports, in non-traditional seasons. By letting the Sixth Circuit decision stand, MHSAA will be required to implement a plan that remedies this discriminatory treatment by the fall of 2007.

Women's Sports Foundation President, Aimee Mullins stated, "Too many girls were deprived of competitive opportunities that should have been afforded to them. After almost ten years, the Supreme Court's decision has vindicated these athletes and has set the stage for more girls to benefit from participating in high school athletics. Now it's time for MHSAA to move expeditiously to make sure that all Michigan girls are treated fairly".

The Women's Sports Foundation has been involved in this case from the beginning, providing expert testimony detailing the types of discrimination that occurs when girls are forced to play in non-traditional seasons. CEO Donna Lopiano, who testified in the lawsuit, maintained that clearly the MHSAA was discriminating against female athletes. "This case was filed by parents in 1998, parents who wanted their daughters treated as well as their sons. It's amazing it has taken this long, but right has prevailed. Female athletes deserve the same chances as male athletes to be seen during regular seasons of play so that college coaches are making scholarships offers and decisions based senior year performances. This wasn't happening in non-traditional seasons that occurred after deadlines for offering scholarships. Girls deserve the same opportunity as boys to play out-of-season club sports to enhance their skills and abilities. This wasn't happening when non-traditional seasons overlapped club sport seasons. And, high school female athletes should be recognized for All-America teams in the same way as high school boys who play sports. Selection for these awards was not possible for most of the girls playing in non-traditional seasons which fell after these selection periods," stated Dr. Lopiano.

Dr. Lopiano continued, "The press doesn't seem to realize that there are several key legal precedents established by this case including (1) high school athletic associations ARE state actors who must comply with the US Constitution, (2) high school athletic associations ARE subject to Title IX, and (3) high school athletic programs are public accommodations subject state civil rights laws."

### **About the Women's Sports Foundation**

Founded in 1974 by Billie Jean King, the Women's Sports Foundation is a national charitable educational organization seeking to advance the lives of girls and women through sports and physical activity. The Foundation's Participation, Education, Advocacy, Research and Leadership Programs are made possible by gifts from individuals, foundations and corporations. For more information, please call the Foundation at (800) 227-3988. You can also visit our Web site at [www.WomensSportsFoundation.org](http://www.WomensSportsFoundation.org).

###