

INTRO

The Texas House has passed a measure that would force trans Texas youth to play on public school sports teams that align with their sex assigned at birth. The bill is a priority for both Governor Greg Abbott and Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick. And the Texas Standard's Jill Ament reports it's in good position to clear the State Senate and make it to the governor's desk.

SCRIPT (TRT: 2:00)

After eleven hours of floor debate the Texas House fully passed House Bill 25 on Thursday. Republican Valoree Swanson of Spring wrote the bill. She said it's designed to ensure fairness in women's sports.

CUT SWANSON: *"The bill I'm bringing before you today protects girls' safety and their right to equal access to athletic opportunities. This is a right guaranteed to our girls under Title IX."*

Debate on the bill lasted so long largely because House Democrats tried to tack on 20 amendments to the legislation. Their goal was to either kill the bill or make it more inclusive for trans youth. Just one of the amendments the Democrats introduced was adopted. Austin Democratic State Representative Celia Israel emotionally accused Governor Abbott of playing politics with the lives of trans children in Texas.

ISRAEL CUT: *"You're causing more pain tonight. We hope the courts will protect us. But damage has been done. I'm imploring you... to be better, expect better, expect more."*

Austinite Karen Krajcer is the mom of a trans girl. She stayed for the entirety of Thursday's house floor debate.

KRACJER CUT: *"I'm concerned not just about this bill but about what this suggest about the state of Texas. These legislators are supposed to represent the voices of Texans. Trans kids are Texans too, and their voices are not being heard."*

Similar versions of this measure have been considered since the regular legislation session in January – but were unsuccessful. Governor Abbott continued to make the legislation a priority in each of the three special sessions this year. The Senate has cleared versions of the bill easily but there have been roadblocks in the House each time. Now that the legislation has tentatively passed the full House – HB 25 looks to be well on its way to becoming law as it heads to the Senate.

In Austin, I'm Jill Ament.