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For Immediate Release

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***Women's Law Project and Senator Mary Jo White Team Up
To Give Pennsylvania Girls a Sporting Chance***

*Pennsylvania Equity in Interscholastic Athletics Disclosure Act
Introduced in the Pennsylvania Senate*

(Harrisburg, PA) May 27, 2009 – Today, the Women's Law Project and Senator Mary Jo White (R-21) announced the introduction of the Pennsylvania Equity in Interscholastic Athletics Disclosure Act, Senate Bill 890.

"Pennsylvania has seen sweeping improvement in the number of girls playing sports as a result of Title IX, but many young women continue to be deprived of equal opportunity to play sports," said Carol Tracy, executive director of the Women's Law Project. "Boys still get the lion's share of athletic resources in high schools and middle schools across the state—and girls are still getting inferior facilities, fields, uniforms, equipment, and coaching."

Title IX, the landmark federal law adopted 37 years ago this June, requires federally funded schools to provide equitable opportunities for female and male students to participate in sports. Title IX applies to all grade levels from elementary school through college. Federal law requires colleges and universities to publicly disclose information about their athletic programs by gender, including student participation, facilities and equipment, coaching, and financial expenditures on behalf of sports teams. However, as in many states, Pennsylvania's secondary schools are not currently required to publicly disclose similar information about their athletic programs. Senate Bill 890 will require Pennsylvania's public, charter, and private secondary schools, grades 7 – 12, to report the same information colleges report by gender. It also requires athletic participation to be reported by race and ethnicity.

“I support equal athletic opportunities for female and male high school students. By making athletic data publicly available, we will have the essential information we need to make sure all students have adequate access to sports programs,” said Senator White, the prime sponsor of the Senate bill. Senator White’s district extends from Butler to Erie counties in western Pennsylvania.

The legislation enjoys strong bi-partisan support with twenty of the Senate’s fifty members joining Senator White in co-sponsoring the bill.

By adopting this bill, Pennsylvania will join New Mexico, Georgia, and Kentucky in the growing list of states that are seeking to improve compliance with Title IX in secondary schools by monitoring equality in their athletics programs.

The Women’s Law Project has recently published a manual *Are Schools Giving Female Athletes a Sporting Chance: A Guide to Gender Equity in Pennsylvania Schools* which is available at http://www.womenslawproject.org/reports/TitleIX_SportingChance.pdf

The Women’s Law Project is a public interest law center with offices in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

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