

PRESS RELEASE



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MONTGOMERY, Alabama (Feb 25) – The Alabama House and Senate held hearings on both versions of the “What is a Woman” Act (House Bill 111 and Senate Bill 92), which would [unnecessarily create the formal legal statuses of "male" and "female"](#), last week. On Tuesday (February 20th), the Senate County and Municipal Government Committee gave the bill a favorable report. The following day, the House Judiciary Committee discussed the bill but did not hold a vote. Both committees held public hearings.

Alabama residents concerned about the negative impacts of these bills turned out in overwhelming numbers to speak against them — more than double the number of those signed up to support them. Despite this, the chairs of both committees arbitrarily limited the number of people allowed to testify. Those who did speak delivered powerful testimony about how this bill would impact them and their communities. Allison Montgomery, a Madison County resident, discussed how the bill would “force men in the trans community, whose bodies produce ova, into women’s spaces,” even those who had “taken testosterone for years and [...] developed full beards.” She also explained how non-transgender women who don’t “look feminine enough” could be targeted for “scrutiny and harassment” using these bills as justification — noting that “this is especially likely for women with hormone imbalances like PCOS.”

Several speakers in favor of the bills were paid lobbyists, activists from outside the state, or both. Paula Scanlan, who [resides in the New York City area](#) and [is employed as an “ambassador” for the Independent Women’s Forum](#), testified for HB111 on Wednesday. The Independent Women’s Forum, an organization founded to promote “[conservative alternative\[s\] to feminist tenets](#),” is actively working to push model legislation nearly identical to HB111 in several states.

“The Republican majority in the legislature is not interested in listening to constituents who drive hours to Montgomery just to speak at committee meetings,” said Hunter Fuller, an organizer with the Alabama Trans Rights Action Coalition (ALTRAC). “It’s very difficult to justify arbitrarily limiting public comment and prioritizing out-of-state speakers who have no stake in this issue over citizens who are just concerned about their own rights.”

The advancement of SB92 and HB111 has caused alarm for transgender people and their allies in the state. Andrea Trenaman of House District 10, who was not given time to present her testimony at either hearing, said that “this bill has been heavy on my mind, and has made my future in Alabama uncertain. Dr. Belle Moyers — a biologist — spoke at the hearing against a bill similar to this one last year. She has since moved away from Alabama to a safer state. I also know a software engineer who has left the state for similar reasons, as well as a mechanical engineer. We are far from the only ones.”

House Bill 111 is scheduled for a committee vote on Wednesday, February 28th. Senate Bill 92 must now receive a majority vote by the entire Senate floor in order to advance.

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ABOUT ALTRAC: The Alabama Transgender Rights Action Coalition provides information and contact tools to Alabama citizens concerned about legislative attacks on queer and transgender people.

<https://altrac.works>