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# Oregon school district calls on Cruz to take down transgender ads

BY BROOKE MIGDON - 10/24/24 5:45 PM ET

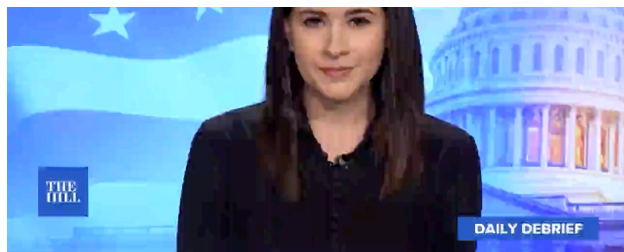


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An Oregon school district on Thursday asked Sen. Ted Cruz’s (R-Texas) campaign to take down two ads targeting transgender athletes because they include a photograph of two minor girls who are not transgender and whose parents did not give the Cruz campaign permission to use the photo.

Cruz’s [campaign ads](#), part of a multimillion-dollar media blitz hitting his opponent, Rep. [Colin Allred](#) (D-Texas), over his support for trans-inclusive policies, feature photographs of high-profile transgender athletes including former University of Pennsylvania swimmer Lia Thomas and CeCé Telfer, a Jamaican-born sprinter and the first out trans woman to win an NCAA title.

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They also include a photo of two teenage girls who compete in track and field events at neighboring high

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schools in western Oregon. Neither of the girls pictured are transgender, though the Cruz ads imply otherwise.

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A representative for one of the girl’s school districts said the district and the girl’s family were unaware of the ads until The Hill contacted them. The girl’s parents did not give the Cruz campaign permission to use the photo, the representative said.

The parent of the second girl in the photo did not return a phone call seeking comment. The Hill is not releasing the names of the girls because they are minors.

In an email sent Thursday to the Cruz campaign, the representative from the Beaverton School District requested the ads be pulled “from any and all distribution platforms,” noting that the two athletes pictured are minors.

“The family nor the school or school district ever gave permission for this photo to be used,” the representative wrote in the email, which was shared with The Hill.

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“It is alarming that your campaign would have produced/distributed/promoted this ad with false information, especially with minor children involved.”

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The image in the Cruz ad of the two girls appears to come from an April report by [Central Oregon Daily News](#) about criticisms levied against a transgender high school athlete in the state.

That news report included a photo of the two girls in the Cruz ad in a way that would lead most viewers to believe that one of the girls in the photo is transgender. The story discusses at length a transgender girl who

competed in an event but never shows the athlete's image.

A Cruz campaign spokesperson told The Hill that the photo “features a female athlete who spoke out against boys playing in girls’ sports after participating in a track meet where a biological male beat female athletes and impacted individual and team medal results.”

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The spokesperson did not directly respond to questions about the school district’s request to take the ad down, or whether the ad is misleading.

Cruz, who has served in the Senate since 2013, is one of the upper chamber’s leading conservatives and a vocal opponent of trans-inclusive policies.

A 2021 bill introduced by Cruz and Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) sought to make it a violation of Title IX — the federal civil rights law preventing sex discrimination in schools and education programs that receive

government funding — for schools to allow transgender women and girls to compete on female sports teams.

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In a recent debate with Allred, Cruz repeatedly referred to transgender women as “biological boys” and falsely claimed that the Equality Act, a proposal to make sexual orientation and gender identity protected classes, mandated “that boys be able to go into girls’ bathrooms, and their locker rooms and their changing rooms.”

An Oct. 4 episode of his podcast, “Verdict with [Ted Cruz](#),” features Riley Gaines, a former college swimmer who frequently advocates against the inclusion of transgender athletes.

Cruz and Allred are [in a virtual dead heat](#) for one of Texas’s two Senate seats, according to an Emerson College Polling/The Hill survey released Wednesday. An [election forecast](#)

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[model from The Hill](#) and [Decision Desk HQ](#) predicts Cruz has a 76 percent chance of winning reelection.

**TAGS** COLIN ALLRED TED CRUZ

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