

House Bill 1204

An Act Concerning County Boards and Nonpublic Prekindergarten Programs and Schools -
Discrimination - Prohibition

SUPPORT

26 February 2020

House Ways & Means Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Delegates,

As a public educator, I am writing to encourage you to support House Bill 1204; An Act Concerning County Boards and Nonpublic Prekindergarten Programs and Schools – Discrimination – Prohibition. This legislation would codify anti-discrimination protections for all students in grades pre-K to 12 attending public schools or schools that receive public funds.

I support this legislation because I believe that our schools should not discriminate against students. Without this law, this guidance can be ignored and often leaves our students unprotected. Schools should be safe places where students are free to be themselves. By requiring schools to spell out their anti-discrimination policies, this law provides appropriate recourse for parents and students to stand up against inequitable treatment.

According to GLSEN’s 2017 National School Climate Survey, many LGBTQ students in Maryland reported discriminatory policies or practices at their school. Nearly 3 in 5 (57%) experienced at least one form of anti-LGBTQ discrimination at school during the past year. Furthermore, fewer than 1 in 5 (18%) attended a school with a comprehensive anti-bullying/harassment policy that included specific protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. Fewer than 1 in 5 (17%) had a policy or official guidelines to support transgender or gender nonconforming (trans/GNC) students.

In the interest of our students and schools, I urge you to pass House Bill 1204.

Sincerely,

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