

## HB 359

### Education – Interscholastic & Intramural Junior Varsity & Varsity Teams and Sports – Designation Based on Sex

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**Position: Unfavorable**

**Testimony by Isabella Shycoff**

HB 359 proposes to prohibit transgender girls from participating in girls JV, Varsity and intramural sports. Although transgender girls identify as girls, **(THEY ARE GIRLS)** this bill will expressly prohibit them from competing on girl's teams. The bill also protects schools from government agencies, athletic associations, and other organizing entities that object to a school from instituting such a discriminatory policy. Finally, the bill provides for cause of action for students harmed by schools that violate this proposed law.

**HB 359 is pure, out-in-the-open, in your face discrimination and should be rejected!**

Maryland's transgender girls deserve every opportunity to fully pursue all that women's athletics has to offer. There is significant research affirming the social, physical, and mental health benefits of participating in sports.

HB 359 raises questions about how it can possibly be enforced fairly and without trauma. Who is in charge of determining which girls are transgender and how will they determine that? If the concern is about unfair advantage, there are plenty of ways that athletes and teams cheat that are far more popular and widely used. Why aren't schools testing for performance enhancing drugs? Are we confident that students aren't being recruited from outside districts for some teams? Is it possible we have coaches or referees who manipulate scores or throw games?

If you believe that transgender girls have an unfair advantage, do you have the same concerns about height differences, hand size, physical emotional maturity, and opportunities (economic and otherwise) for specialized training? Life is inherently unfair, but to single out transgender girls for discrimination is cruel and unnecessary.

Maryland's trans youth need our support and our acceptance, not barriers and intolerance. Reject HB 359.

**I urge an unfavorable report by the Committee.**