

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my strong concerns in relation to the below bill currently under consideration.

HB0047 Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams - Designation Based on Sex (Fairness In Girls' Sports Act)

This bill is just the local manifestation of the national attack on the LGBTQ+ community from the Republican Party and the far right. They see a resurgent culture war, specifically focused on the ability for the LGBTQ+ community to even be visible in the public sphere, as key to electoral success with their base since they do not have any substantive solutions to offer to the pressing issues of our time. And not even children are immune from this assault.

HB0047 is another bill where the cruelty is the point. Multiple studies, as well as anecdotal history, show that trans athletes are no better or worse at sports when participating in teams that align with their gender. Additionally, this bill furthers two other forms of oppression beyond that experienced by the trans community:

- it erases any other cultural identities that exist beyond a gender binary such as the Two Spirit community within our indigenous communities
- it further policies the idea of womanhood and femininity on a biological scale which often centers whiteness, thinness, and a specific way of presenting as feminine as the standard
  - ex. Caster Semanaya, a Black woman, being subjected to sex verification testing and genetic screening, but Michael Phelps being lauded for his "good genes"

Bills such as this also open up any person assigned female at birth to accusations and harassment centered on gender identity if the person they beat is a sore loser. Anyone could be "accused" of being trans, and then what? Additionally, proof that this bill is not needed can be found in the vast amount of trans athletes that are not out-competing their cis-gendered opponents.

I am firmly in opposition of this bill and pray it will not make it out of committee. I hope Maryland's elected officials will stand in opposition of the demonization and erasure of the LGBTQ+ community. This bill is nothing more than fearmongering masquerading as a solution to a problem that does not exist.

Thank you,

Rev. Ron Padrón