

Sandy Gold Raynes
4 Shirley Avenue
Reisterstown, MD 21136
M: 410-456-5280
sgraynes@gmail.com

Bill: HB1430 Public Schools - Parents' Rights (Education Bill of Rights for Families Act)

Position: **UNFAVORABLE**

My name is Sandy Gold Raynes, a resident of Baltimore County, District 10, submitting testimony **opposing HB1430, Parents' Rights**. I am active with the Baltimore County group of PFLAG Howard County chapter, and board member of GLSEN Maryland, but my testimony for this bill is based on being a parent of two former BCPS students, one of whom is transgender having started to transition during the first year of college. This journey with and alongside of him is what brought me to be an advocate for LGBTQ+ youth and their families.

GLSEN Maryland submitted written testimony opposing HB1430 that I fully agree with, and there is another aspect that needs to be brought to your attention as a reason to oppose this bill. These are sections B.2 and B.3, allowing for parents to be able to "Review health or medical records," and Be promptly notified if an employee...suspects that a criminal offense has been committed against the parents' child." The health and medical records could include personal information that indicates the student's sexual preferences.

The necessary reporting of "criminal offenses" such as bullying would "out" a student if they are the victim of gender and/or sexual preference-based bullying. This is an exception that some school systems allows the students to opt out of informing their parents. Montgomery County faced a lawsuit about this provision that was upheld by a federal court with the judge saying, "guidelines carefully balance the interests of both the parents and students, encouraging parental input when the student consents, but avoiding it when the student expresses concern that parents would not be supportive, or that disclosing their gender identity to their parents may put them in harm's way." (<https://moco360.media/2022/08/20/federal-lawsuit-challenging-mcps-student-gender-identity-guidelines-dismissed/>)

These provisions assume that the child's parents are supportive of their child's well-being but this is not true for most/many LGBTQ students and even more so for transgender/non-binary students. According to the Trevor Project, only 38% of LGBTQ young people feel affirmed at home and 54% feel affirmed at school. For transgender and non-binary young people, that dropped to 35% at home and 52% at school.

(https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2023/assets/static/05_TREVOR05_2023survey.pdf). According to GLSEN School Climate Survey for Maryland, 72% of MD high school students could identify 6 or more supportive educators. (https://maps.glsen.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/GLSEN_2021_NSCS_State_Snapshots_MD.pdf) Essentially, young people feel better supported and affirmed at school than at home.

Passing this bill will compromise LGBTQ+ students emotional and physical safety. Since becoming a parent of a lovely and thriving transgender son and an ally/advocate, I am shocked and humbled by how many trans and non-binary young adults laud me and my husband for simply continuing to parent my son as we have since his birth. It's very hard to accept how many parents do not accept their children, including some we have known for many years. I implore you to also be an ally and **vote unfavorable** for this bill.

