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The Honorable Luke Clippinger
101 Taylor House Office Building
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Testimony of Trans Maryland

IN SUPPORT OF

House Bill #380: Criminal Law - Prohibition on Sale of Contraceptives and Contraceptive Devices by Vending Machine in School - Repeal

To the Chair, Vice Chair, and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee:

Trans Maryland is a multi-racial, multi-gender, trans-led community power building organization dedicated to Maryland's trans community. Trans Maryland believes in protecting the rights of all Marylanders, particularly transgender community members, to access safe, inclusive, and appropriate healthcare, including access to contraceptives and contraceptive devices.

Contraceptives and contraceptive devices are an important part of sexual healthcare as they help significantly reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections and reduce the risk of unplanned pregnancies.

While Maryland law currently permits schools to distribute contraceptives free of charge, House Bill 380 would nonetheless increase access to condoms and other contraceptives by expanding both the number of locations from which they are made available and the hours of availability. The best contraceptive is the one you have with you when you have sex, so limiting availability of condoms to only when the nurse's office is open defeats the purpose of making them available to students in the first place. Moreover, by making contraceptives available through a non-judgmental vending machine, we will significantly reduce the shame factor that leads too many young people to avoid purchasing or asking for condoms in the first place.

By expanding access to contraceptives among Maryland's young people, House Bill 380 will encourage safer sex practices, while decreasing teen pregnancies and the transmission of STIs. For these reasons, Trans Maryland supports a favorable report on House Bill 380.