



February 11, 2022

Honorable Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building, Room 131
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB515 Inclusive Athletic Attire Act

Dear Chair Vanessa Atterbeary and House Ways and Means Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB515 entitled Inclusive Athletic Attire Act.

I've never been much of an athlete, myself. I have, however, been in observant religious life and multi-faith community my entire life. The passage of HB515 will allow all students to participate in sports, regardless of religious observance. It is shocking to me that this is not already law in Maryland, and urge our lawmakers to speedily pass this bill.

Barring students participation in any part of educational or extracurricular life because of religious observance is wrong, and it is dangerous. In a time of increasing Islamophobia, white supremacy, anti-Sikh violence, and anti-Semitism, protections for students of faith to proudly and safely wear their religious garb is tantamount. The stories of Je'Nan Hayes and Maheen Haq, students who were barred from playing on their school basketball teams because they wear hijab is an embarrassment to the values we all hold as Americans.

I am proud to be part of a multifaith coalition of voices in support of this legislation, and I respectfully urge your vote in favor of it. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Ariana Katz
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