



Senate Bill 381
Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams - Designation Based on Sex
February 7, 2024
Unfavorable

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and the members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

The Trans Rights Advocacy Coalition (TRAC) is submitting this testimony in strong opposition to SB381, which would bar young athletes from participating in sports for no reason other than transphobia, sexism, and hatred.

TRAC is a Maryland-based and entirely trans-led coalition committed to ensuring that all transgender and gender expansive Marylanders can live safe and affirming lives. Our membership includes healthcare providers, attorneys, academics, organizers and other community members who all stand in strong opposition to any attempt to bar trans students from participating in sports.

In addition to [being illegal](#) under Title IX and the Equal Protection Clause, trans athlete bans have zero basis in any sort of scientific fact. There is [no evidence](#) that trans athletes have an effect on the fairness or competitiveness of sports in the many years that they have played alongside their cisgender peers. Transgender athletes vary in ability, just like all other young people. Various medical and sports organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the International Olympic Committee, have affirmed that transgender girls should be allowed to participate in teams consistent with their gender identity.

This bill would affect a small number of transgender student athletes in Maryland – however, the effect on that group of students would be devastating. Trans students already face a [concerning level of harassment and discrimination at school](#). Further ostracizing them from their peers by barring them from playing sports would have untold consequences for an already vulnerable group.

It is [well known](#) that participation in sports gives young people confidence, strengthens their friendships, teaches them valuable skills like leadership and teamwork, and helps them maintain good physical health. Keeping a group of students from experiencing those benefits for no reason other than bigotry is unconscionable.

For all these reasons and many more, the Trans Rights Advocacy Coalition is in strong opposition to SB381. We respectfully urge the committee to return an unfavorable report on the bill.

Sincerely,
The Trans Rights Advocacy Coalition