

February 7, 2024

The Honorable Senator Brian Feldman, Chairman
And Members of the Energy, Education & the Environment Committee
Maryland Senate
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: **SB381** – Energy, Education & the Environment Committee – Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Team Designation Based on Sex (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act) -- **SUPPORT**

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members of the Energy, Education & the Environment Committee,

I am representing 400 members from the Montgomery County Federation of Republican Women. We strongly support the Fairness in Girls' Sports Act. Maryland lags behind other states in creating legislation like SB381. There are 24 states that have recognized through legislation that women's sports are for women. Because of the gender identity trends and an increasing number of unfair and unsafe incidents we are seeing today, it is now necessary for Maryland to codify that women's sports are for biological females.

As representatives of your districts, it is important to know how people feel about this issue. A Gallup poll released in June, 2023 shows that 69% of Americans say that transgender athletes should only be allowed to compete on sports teams that correspond with the sex they were assigned at birth. This percentage has grown by 7% from a Gallup Poll in 2021, where 62% shared the same views. ¹

Just as you, we empathize with transgender athletes and agree that they should be able to participate in sports, so create a new category for them or allow them to compete according to their gender assigned at birth.

While you may be hearing from representatives from the LGBTQ+ community, not all LGBTQ citizens agree with the opposers of this bill:

Maria Navratilova: "Come on - women's tennis is not for failed male athletes- whatever age. This is not right and it is not fair."

Caitlyn Jenner: "That's why I oppose biological boys who are trans competing in girls' sports in school. It just isn't fair. And we have to protect girls' sports in our schools,"

It is conceivable that with current state policies, a team of all-transgender women could compete for the state title in high school women's basketball. I read the MPSSAA

¹ *Gallup Poll article:

<https://www.nbcnews.com/nbc-out/out-news/americans-oppose-inclusion-trans-athletes-sports-poll-finds-rcna88940>

Guidance for Participation of Transgender Youth in Interscholastic Athletics and this seems like the only guidance our state has on this issue, and the guidance is vague. Passing this bill would set parameters in place that protect women and ensure fair competition.

There are thousands of young women, some of whom are hoping to earn college scholarships and shatter records, who are counting on you to support their ability to compete safely and fairly.

For these reasons, we urge you file a **favorable** report.

Sincerely,

Laurie Halverson, Board Member and past President
Montgomery County Federation of Republican Women
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