

**2025 SB0588 Testimony For 2025-03-05.pdf**

Uploaded by: Alan Lang

Position: FAV

## **SB0588 – Favorable**

Honorable Senators

I support

- Requiring certain interscholastic and intramural junior varsity and varsity athletic teams or sports sponsored by certain schools to be expressly designated for boys or girls;
- prohibiting certain interscholastic and intramural junior varsity and varsity athletic teams or sports from including biological boys on teams designated for biological girls;
- prohibiting certain entities from taking certain adverse actions against a school under certain circumstances.

I strongly believe that biological males, whether using puberty blockers or have had operations altering their outward appearance should not be allowed to participate in sports designated for biological girls. Post-puberty biological boys are bigger, stronger, and faster than biological girls and pose a physical danger to these girls in addition to their unfair advantages.

Girls in other states have already suffered serious injuries by allowing biological males to participate in girls' sports. In other cases, biological boys have shattered biological girls records and deprived some of the best female athletes from qualifying for meets where they could have participated in front of college recruiters, thus depriving them from obtaining possible scholarships.

Finally, under the current interpretation of the Federal standards in Title IX, allowing biological males in female sports would be illegal.

Please enter a favorable report for SB0588.

Alan Lang  
45 Marys Mount Road  
Harwood, Maryland 20776  
410-336-9745  
[Alanlang1@verizon.net](mailto:Alanlang1@verizon.net)

Legislative District 30B  
March 5, 2025

# **SB 588 Fairness in Girls' Sports Act Written Testi**

Uploaded by: Amy Waychoff

Position: FAV

SB 588  
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Support  
Amy Waychoff  
Montgomery County, LD 18  
March 3, 2025

My name is Amy Waychoff and I have lived in Montgomery County for over 37 years. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 588, the Fairness in Girls' Sports Act.

As a competitor in volleyball, softball and tennis when I was a teenager, I have fond memories about how those activities improved my self esteem, and in particular, my body image. Being with a group of other teens of the same sex all working toward a common goal was empowering.

Today, we have decided that Title IX is not meant to empower women, but to empower men with gender dysphoria who think they are entitled to play girls' and women's sports. This movement is taking Title IX and twisting it like a pretzel into something unrecognizable.

In 2023, a top NCAA female swimmer from the University of Kentucky spoke out about her experiences competing against transgender athlete Lia Thomas. According to Riley Gaines, the most traumatic part of the competition was not in the swimming pool, but in the locker room: "We did not give our consent, they did not ask for our consent, but in that locker room we turned around and there's a 6'4" biological man dropping his pants and watching us undress. . . . [A year or two ago] this would have been considered some form of sexual assault [or] voyeurism." She added that "it's my duty as a female athlete who experienced this injustice . . . to advocate for those female athletes who are emotionally blackmailed and gaslit into silence."

Women deserve to have their dressing rooms, and the opportunities for sports scholarships, reserved for their own sex. I therefore strongly support the Fairness in Girls' Sports Act.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

# **SB 588 Fairness in Girls' Sports Act.pdf**

Uploaded by: Annette Deener

Position: FAV

Maryland General Assembly  
Senate Education, Energy, and Environmental Committee  
Annapolis, MD

SUBJECT: SB 588 Fairness in Girls' Sports Act

I am writing to express my sincere concern about fairness in girls' sports in Maryland schools. To allow biological males to compete against girls in girls' sports is absolutely unfair and unsafe to girls. I cite three primary reasons:

1. **Physical Advantage**- There is more to the physical differences in males and females than hormone treatments can rectify. Allowing biological males to compete with girls does not account for the differences in **bone structure, muscle mass, hemoglobin, and lung capacity** that give most males an advantage over their female counterparts in physical competitions. It has been proven in actual competitions between biological males and girls that, given the same amount of practice and prep, the males will dominate over their female competitors. There are actual cases of girls being injured by strong males in girls' sports such as volleyball and hockey.
2. **Safety** - Allowing biological males access to the girls' locker rooms and bathrooms denies the girls privacy in showers and toilet areas when they are unclothed. It also gives the biological males opportunities for sexual assault which no girl should have to be made vulnerable especially in a school setting.
3. **Fairness** - Every time a biological male gets a roster spot on a women's team there is a biological female who is denied an opportunity to compete. Our biological female students will have fewer opportunities to compete for scholarships.

Please give favorable consideration to this bill and provide a safe and fair playing field for our Maryland girls when competing in girls' sports.

Annette M. Deener  
16215 Woburn Rd.  
Sharpsburg, MD 21782

**senate speech.pdf**

Uploaded by: April Bondurant

Position: FAV

Good afternoon, my name is April and I'm a high school basketball player. I'm here today to provide my perspective on allowing men to compete in women's sports.

As a female athlete and a member of the women's basketball team, it is important that women have their own environment to train, practice and compete. We are built different, carry our emotions different, and require different mental health support than men. Each of these differences, and ALL of these differences together affect overall athletic performance.

At school, the men and women's basketball teams practice separately. Each team has a separate time slot to lift, shoot and scrimmage. I have watched the men practice and play many times and there is a sharp contrast. In the weight room and on the court, men on the basketball team are lifting heavier weights, running faster and jumping higher. Men have an advantage over women in all sports due to their muscle mass, their power and their endurance.

Men in women's sports can lead to unsafe situations. In a defensive situation, a man on a fast break running towards a woman defender under the basket, could potentially injure that woman. Men in women's sports can also lead to inappropriate situations. If men and women play a sport together on a team, sharing a locker room with those men could potentially lead to an uncomfortable encounter or comment. Women should be protected and feel safe in their athletic environments, before, during and after a game.

Keeping men and woman separate in sports protects the mental health of all athletes. There is already a high level of pressure to play a sport and balance academic classes. The pressure heightens when you add the possibility of playing against a man and sustaining an injury. This added factor can shatter a woman's confidence in her sport, her training and her athletic ability.

In high school and on many competitive sports teams, varsity spots are limited. If men are allowed to compete for those spots on women's sports teams that leaves less opportunities for those women. This would also reduce the chances for women to earn scholarships to play at the collegiate level.

Female athletes deserve to be proud of their effort, commitment and achievement. Women should not have to feel discouraged because they competed against someone who by nature can be stronger, faster and taller than them.

As a female, I deserve to be inspired by another female teammate, opponent or professional athlete who has achieved a milestone, not by a male athlete who reached that milestone by playing on a woman's team. I deserve to feel motivated by other female

athletes' accomplishments and use that motivation to push me to train harder and reach my own personal athletic goals. I am not inspired by a man's accomplishment when measured against a woman's standard. To have a dream shattered or an opportunity diminished because I am competing against a male athlete is discouraging and it is unfair.

Thank you for allowing me to speak here today to advocate and give women a voice, to preserve our safety and opportunity in sports, and to promote fairness in the student-athlete community.

# **SB 588 Girls' Sports Bill.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brigitta MULLICAN

Position: FAV

Testimony from Brigitta Mullican  
Rockville, MD 20851  
Maryland Legislative District 17

### **Support Senate Bill 588, Fairness in Girls' Sports Act**

I strongly support SB 588, the Fairness in Girls' Sports Act, and request a favorable report on this important legislation to protect girls' sports. When I participated in sports in high school, I would not have wanted boys to compete with me. I participated in a coed volleyball team when I was an adult. The men on the team would smack the ball so hard that sometimes we got hurt.

SB 588 would require high school sports designated for girls to be for people who are born as girls. Anyone who is born a boy should not play on a girls' team or compete as a girl. We need to start putting our girls first and prioritize their safety, social needs, and potential opportunities, including recruitment, scholarships, titles, and awards. Please make playing sports great for everyone: a fair playing field.

Please consider these facts:

1. 1 in 3 teen girls report having contemplated suicide compared to 1 in 5 identifying LGBTQIA+ teens.
2. Every time an athlete born male gets a roster spot on a women's team there is an athlete born female who is denied an opportunity to compete.
3. Data is scarce, but we know at least 700 females have been displaced by males competing in women's sporting events.
4. Girls who participate in sports are less likely to get breast cancer, suffer depression, remain in a violent relationship, do drugs, get pregnant, and are more likely to graduate than girls who do not play sports.
5. Estrogen cannot eliminate the male athletic advantage of those born male who have larger hearts and lungs, different skeletal structures, more hemoglobin, and more muscle mass on average than females.
6. Testosterone and Estrogen, two of the main hormones offered to transgender individuals to supplement their transition, are recognized as performance-enhancing drugs.
7. According to the NCAA, the transgender policy at the college level is decided by the national governing body of each sport at the professional level. In almost all instances, the national governing bodies require biological men to play in men's sports and biological women to play in women's sports. Since a biological male would not be allowed to play on a collegiate women's team, they would be ineligible for scholarships and therefore skew the data used to award athletic scholarships. Our girls may be losing scholarships that could be the difference between them attending college or not attending college at all
8. Categories exist in sporting competitions for sex, weight class, and age. Athletes are not allowed to identify into an age category based on feeling older or younger and we should require the same for biological sex.
9. A recent Gonzales Research poll shows an overwhelming support for fairness in girls' sports with 76% of Maryland voters opposed to allowing biological males to compete on girls' JV and Varsity teams, with 67% strongly opposed. This support transcends party

lines, with 96% of Republicans, 81% of independents, and 65% of Democrats in agreement. Notably, 83% of African Americans also support protecting fairness in girls' sports.

10. 24 states have successfully passed similar laws to ensure fairness in K-12 and collegiate sports, including states that are Democratic-leaning like New Hampshire

This legislation is not about exclusion. Anyone can still try out and participate in the boys' team which will remain in the open category. This is about allowing for fair and meaningful competition on the field of play for girls' sports.

I urge you to support SB 588. Thank you for your kind attention and consideration.

# **Testimony from Brooke Berquist for Senate Bill 588**

Uploaded by: Brooke Berquist

Position: FAV

## Testimony from Brooke Berquist for Senate Bill 588

My name is Brooke Berquist and I reside in Bishopville, Maryland. I was born and raised in the state of Maryland and I have attended Maryland public schools throughout my life. Currently, I am a senior at Stephen Decatur High School in Berlin, Maryland.

On behalf of all biological female athletes in the state of Maryland, I urge you to consider passing Senate Bill 588.

My position in favor of this bill comes from my experience as a high school athlete and an athlete in travel sports. I have competed in numerous sports from my childhood until now, and, in high school, I have participated in three sports: volleyball, basketball, and tennis. While competing in a travel volleyball tournament last year, my team had a match with an opposing team, whose roster included a biological male in the starting lineup. While the other team was warming up, my teammates and I immediately noticed the strength and speed with which the biological male hit the volleyball. It was apparent that the skills of the biological male surpassed anyone else on the court. My teammates and I were not only intimidated, but we feared for our safety. There is very little time to react to a volleyball when it is spiked over the net, and if you are not prepared or if you do not have the reaction time to get underneath the ball, you are in jeopardy of getting hit. My teammates and I simply did not have an answer for the hits from the biological male. Needless to say, we did not win our match against that team.

As I reflect upon that time, I believe that my teammates and I were already defeated when we walked onto the court. First, our confidence was struck down because we knew we were not ready for the level of competition that the biological male brought. While our skill set may have matched, our strength did not. Secondly, we played with fear, which is not a winning recipe. My teammates and I had never experienced such speed and force in hitting, and we were concerned about bigger issues than just winning the match. I realize that this encounter did not occur in the public school arena, but it could without proper legislation in place.

As a three sport athlete in high school, I am very familiar with the level of play of biological males in several sports. In basketball, biological male players typically run faster, shuffle faster, pass harder, jump higher, box out more strongly, and/or dunk. In tennis, male players typically serve the ball harder, get to the ball more quickly, hit ground and backstrokes with greater force, and hit overhead smashes harder and faster. I believe that in every varsity sport in my high school, a competitive biological male athlete possesses the muscle mass, fast twitch muscle fibers, and sheer strength to out compete most of the biological female athletes.

In summary, including biological males in female sports does not establish a level playing field for biological females. For those athletes who play with a biological male on their own team, they face the possibility of losing starting positions or even positions on the team, reduced playing time and time on task, participating in individual events where they could win medals, and loss of confidence. Additionally, there are logistical issues of dressing and undressing in

team locker rooms. For those female athletes who aspire to go on to play at the collegiate level, they face unfair competition where game losses or lost positions on teams may have seismic impacts upon their careers. Perhaps more significantly, they face the possibility of losing athletic scholarships because of all of the aforementioned consequences. Finally, for those athletes who play against biological males, they face the possibility of suffering injuries against a significantly stronger and faster opponent.

This is not a complicated bill. It is simple. If we are going to label sports for boys and girls, then let's make sure that the participants in each are biologically consistent with the category.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Position: FAV

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This is not a complicated bill. It is simple. If we are going to label sports for boys and girls, then let's make sure that the participants in each are biologically consistent with the category.

Thank you for your consideration.

**SB-588-250303-Fairness-Girls-sports.pdf**

Uploaded by: Christine Hunt

Position: FAV

Christine Hunt and Jay Crouthers  
1014 Dockser Drive  
Crownsville, MD 21032

3/3/2025

Maryland General Assembly  
Members of the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee  
Annapolis, MD

RE: SB 588 - Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams and Sports - Designation (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)

Dear Senators,

We support and respectfully request that you vote for this bill.

The petition below says it all for us. The abuse, devastating conditions and disappointments which girls are now being subjected to is completely against the values of our society. If biological males that identify with being female want to play sports, then perhaps they should have their own locker rooms and leagues and NOT be combined with biological women's sports activities.

Petition:

The fight to protect the integrity of girls' sports has never been more critical. Sports should be about fairness, opportunity, and respect for the hard work that athletes dedicate to their craft. Fairness in Girls' Sports, ensures only biological females compete in high school varsity and junior varsity girls' sports.

**But this fight goes beyond records.** It's about protecting the physical safety of female athletes. In one appalling case, a female volleyball player suffered a traumatic brain injury after a ball was spiked at her by a trans-identified male competitor. In another, a high school field hockey player had her teeth knocked out. These aren't isolated incidents—they're warnings about the real-world consequences of ignoring biology.

Even the rules and equipment in sports reflect these biological differences. Girls' volleyball nets are lower. Girls' basketballs are smaller. And lacrosse rules and uniforms are designed specifically for the female body. These adjustments exist because male and female physiology isn't interchangeable. **Yet activists pushing to blur these distinctions seem to believe gender ideology trumps fairness and safety.**

Sports are about physical performance—not identity. It takes just one trans-identified male to disrupt the entire landscape of girls' sports. We've seen this globally, where countless podium spots, scholarships, and championship titles have been lost by female athletes to trans-identified males. **As a society, we can respect and celebrate diversity while maintaining fair competition by recognizing the realities of biology.**

Recently, the Biden administration backed off a proposed rule that would have extended Title IX protections to transgender athletes. This decision shows that public sentiment and legal pushback are starting to shift the conversation back toward common sense. At least 25 states have passed laws to protect girls' sports, and Congress will revisit HR 734, the Protecting Women and Girls in Sports Act, in 2025.

These bills, that promote these policies, are harming our children more than helping them, and all for an agenda that a small margin of Marylanders MAY want. We believe that these gender-based legislations are being pushed on us from zealots at the federal level and special interest groups that have a sinister agenda.

WHO IS REALLY BEHIND THIS LEGISLATION? WHOSE SPECIAL INTEREST IS IT? DID THIS COME FROM A MARYLAND CITIZEN OR FROM SOMEONE ON THE FEDERAL LEVEL OR A SPECIAL INTEREST LOBBYIST? HOW HIGH DO YOU HAVE TO GO TO DETERMINE WHY THIS IS NOW A BILL BEING CONSIDERED IN OUR STATE?

We expect you to PUT MARYLANDERS FIRST and oppose this bill. If a bill does not enhance the life and well-being of us then it shouldn't become law. This bill complicates the lives of children, which does NOT enhance their lives.

Sincerely,

Christine Hunt and Jay Crouthers

# **Girls sports testimony 2025 SB588.pdf**

Uploaded by: Debbie Yatsuk

Position: FAV

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB588  
FAIRNESS IN GIRLS SPORTS ACT**

March 5, 2025  
Senate EEE Committee

Deborah Yatsuk  
District 30A, Annapolis  
410-507-4543

Dear Members of the Committee,

You probably have heard about biological boys playing on girl's competitive high school teams, and of how well they perform, even at the college and international level. But, if science proves males have physical, muscular, circulatory and respiratory physiological advantages, is that fair to biological girls who they are playing with or against? It also begs the question, "Why is there no fuss about girls playing on boys competitive teams?" Is it because males are not threatened by females due to the above mentioned physiological advantages?

Maybe you have already made up your mind, if it's fair or right, but as I am always eager to learn about an issue, I trust you are too. It was quite enlightening when I visited Delegate and Senate offices this session and spoke to members and staff how many were supportive of this bill. Some were parents, some were athletes, some knew the science of birth sex that makes us different. Some live in a bubble of voices that have made this only a civil rights issue for transgenders, dismissing the rights and dreams and mental health of girls to compete fairly and safely, and appreciated the further information.

**Why can't a trans-identifying female compete fairly with biological females?**

When comparing the two sexes, hormones are a measurable determining factor. Two years of hormone therapy before puberty can draw the physical aspects of the sexes closer, but not equal. Changing how we look on the outside is easier than our organs on the inside. Male lungs can oxygenate/respire at a higher level, and their heart muscle circulates blood faster. This is an advantage when the body is handling the stress of high performance. Scientific studies show that young males at the age of 6, before puberty, have significant advantages over females in cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, speed and power tests.

The Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA), in their guide for participation in interscholastic athletics states:

Principle #3: "The integrity of women's sports should be preserved"

Principle #5: "Policies governing the participation in sports should be FAIR in light of the tremendous variation among individuals in strength, size, musculature and ability"

**There is a reason why different rules and equipment apply to many single-sex competitive sports which are based on biological sex – such as lacrosse, golf,**

**volleyball, basketball and gymnastics. TEAMS BASED ON BIOLOGICAL SEX  
CREATE THE FAIREST COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT. Bodies play sports.**

God creates all of us special and loved, and it is not in our job description to judge how each other is made. Tiny atoms of DNA, and the male and female sexes designed to fit together for reproduction is truly miraculous! Chromosomes dictate what we are, and a Y chromosome cannot be changed by any surgical procedure or systemic therapy.

Not everyone can win in competitive sports - this is not about a participation trophy - but I hope the win that comes out of this is that High School biological girls, who have mental health and physical issues too, and dreams and goals, are given a chance to prove themselves against their same sex, and that opportunities for fair and safe competition are made available to all through rules, equipment and categories appropriate for the players.

The momentum for this action, to allow competitive sports to be based on meritocracy and excellence within a single sex, is growing nationwide, with 26 states so far passing or introducing legislation. The MGA loves to either follow other states, or set an example, so either way, the time to do so is now!

Thank you for your respect of all, acknowledgment of our biological differences, and courage to support opportunities for females in competitive sports.

**Debbie Yatsuk**

- **Mother of 3 daughters that played competitive sports**
- **Competitive rower where classifications are by sex, and then age and weight within**

# **HB0588-Favorable-Fairness in Girl Sports Act.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jade Chang

Position: FAV

## HB0588-Favorable-Fairness in Girl Sports Act

Due to physiological differences, transgender women / girl should not compete in women's / girls' sport. The bill protects girls from being bullied and from unfair competitions. I vote favorably for this bill.

**Written Testimony for SB588 Mar 3 2025 Girls s**

Uploaded by: James Crawford

Position: FAV

Written Testimony for SB588    March 3, 2025  
FAVOR

I'm Jim Crawford from Charles County. I've been a Volleyball and Soccer referee for 36 years at every level from 6 year old to Semi-pro and College. And I speak on behalf of the several thousand referees in Maryland.

I testified in person the past two sessions at the House in FAVOR of protecting girls in sports.

In 2023 I described how UNFAIR and Cheating it is to allow biological Boys on girl's sports teams.

In 2024 I Described how UNSAFE boys in girls sports is.

Girls have already been hurt playing against boys in contact sports.

Now, know this: that any girl who gets HURT by a boy playing on a girls' team IS ON YOU!

And voters should, and will, hold you accountable.

Don't put the burden on us Referees of protecting girl players from the boys. The most important job of a Ref is player safety. Some of us will refuse to officiate such matches if a biological boy is playing against girls. No doubt, some girls' teams will even refuse to play against a "girls" team with a boy on the opposing team. Such boycott has already occurred on college teams.

You have a responsibility and a duty to PROTECT our and YOUR girls.

This bill SB588 needs to come out of this Committee.

**Show** some Leadership.

**Have** some Self-respect.

**Live up** to your Responsibility.

**Do your Duty** to Protect our girls.

Respectfully submitted,  
James Crawford  
5805 Crawford PI  
Bryantown MD 20617

# **SB588 and HB156 Fairness in Girls Sports.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jean Benhoff

Position: FAV

**Witness: Jean Miceli Benhoff**  
**Jurisdiction: Baltimore County**  
**Bill: SB 588 and HB156 Fairness in Girls Sports**  
**Position: Support/Favorable**

For the purpose of requiring high school interscholastic or intramural athletic teams or sports designated as a girls'/females, or women's team or sport to not include students of the male sex. Simply, only girls born as girls/female, to not include boys/men of the male sex. This is the ONLY way to have fairness of play. Males have testosterone and will always have it in their bodies to dominate/hurt girls/females.

Protect Maryland Girl/Female Citizens NOW!

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Benhoff

I vote!

# **Fairness in Girls Sports (SB 588).pdf**

Uploaded by: Jean Tuttle

Position: FAV

To Members of the Senate Education, Energy and Environment

Fr: Sandy Tuttle, long time resident of Montgomery County, Maryland

Re: Support SB 588, Fairness in Girls' Sports

Date: March 3, 2025

Chairman Feldman and Members of the Senate Education, Energy and Environment, as a long time resident of this state, I continue to support our girls who play in sports, this year, SB 588. I cannot believe that we are continuing to have this discussion in the form of public hearings - at taxpayer expense, I might add.

The message is simple: boys are different than girls - it's basic biology. To think that they are not is based on reality. We have more than a few examples of girls getting severely injured, and traumatized by having boys/men in their personal spaces, such as bathrooms. All to satisfy a very small percentage. A separate category can be set up for those boys wishing to participate in girls' sports if truly needed.

Democrats you are on the wrong side of this issue, and many of you REPRESENT our districts. This is a no-brainer and I'm requesting that you support SB 588.

# Support SB0588.pdf

Uploaded by: Mark Meyerovich

Position: FAV

# Support SB0588

Allowing biological boys to compete against biological girls is discriminatory. Competitive sports must be based on sex, not gender identity. These common sense rules have already become laws in many states. Let's not make Maryland the last state to come to its senses.

The United States has made great strides in promoting women's sports since Title IX revolutionized our country over 50 years ago. Ignoring this issue sets us back for women's rights for almost half a century. Sports are competitive, and like any competition they should be played on a fair and level playing field. There are divisions, age brackets, and weight classes for a reason.

My children participated in competitive sports during their school years. They played in local and national tournaments. Every league has very strict rules about participation. **No higher age participant can join a lower team age team**, and violation of that rule disqualifies the team. The rule is based mainly on physical abilities and characteristics of players, since levels of experience differ widely. If one year of age difference is so important for fair competition, how much difference does male superior physical strength make?!

Female athletes have fought too long and too hard for equal athletic opportunity to lose their protections. Males who suppress testosterone and use feminizing hormones do not mitigate male biological advantage. The average male is bigger, faster, and stronger than the average female.

Sincerely,  
Mark Meyerovich  
Gaithersburg, MD

# **SB0588 Favorable Written Testimony Fairness in Gir**

Uploaded by: Mary Nelson

Position: FAV

Mary Nelson  
1465 Blue Ball Rd  
Elkton, MD 21921

March 3, 2025

Brian Feldman, Chair and members of the Energy and the Environment Senate Committee

Requesting a FAVORABLE report from committee members for SB0588.

I grew up before Title IX was enacted. Girls sat on the sidelines and watched boys' teams play.

After Title IX was enacted, I was thrilled to watch the opportunities my granddaughter and her contemporaries had to train and compete on a level playing field. Then suddenly, they were no longer assured of safe and secure competitive spaces. Girls' privacy was attacked in shared locker rooms and their safety jeopardized in team sports. In both individual and team sports they are no longer recognized and rewarded for their years of training as female athletes when competing against biological males.

The males who have chosen to become trans, should be allowed to compete in their own country-wide leagues along side males with separate scoring and while using the male bathrooms or individual/family bathrooms.

Please help re-instate women and girls' rights to a level and safe playing field.

I request a FAVORABLE report from committee members for SB0588, the "*Fairness in Girls' Sports Act*" bill.

Sincerely,

Mary Nelson  
mgn136@gmail.com

# **Support SB588 Girls Fairness Sport Act.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nancy Shih

Position: FAV

I strongly support SB588 Education – Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams – 2 Designation Based on Sex 3 (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)

Female sports should only be played by biological female. Biological male should not participate in female sports. This is common sense!

A boy, even transitioned to a girl after surgeries, his bone mass & muscles are still stronger than girls.

Countless girls were harmed and injured by male athletes. Some girls suffered severe and permanent brain damage. We must protect our girls from being injured in playing competitive and combat sports in schools by prohibiting biological male to compete with them.

This gender ideology nonsense in girls sport must be stopped!

Please vote in favor of SB588!

Sincerely,

Nancy Shih

Howard County

# 588.pdf

Uploaded by: Preston Davis

Position: FAV

To the members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee:

I strongly support SB 588, the Fairness in Girls' Sports Act, and ask for a favorable report on this important legislation to protect girls' sports.

I believe that allowing biological males to compete in girl's sports is both unfair and detrimental to females. Biological males, born male at birth, have very different physical makeup that gives them physical abilities that biological females don't possess. This is inherently unfair. Sports competitions should be based on physical equality.

This legislation is not about exclusion. Anyone can still try out and participate for the boys' team which will remain on open category. This is about allowing for fair and meaningful competition on the field of play for girls' sports.

I urge you to support SB 588. Thank you for your kind attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Preston C. Davis , Jr.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Preston C. Davis, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a distinct 'Jr.' at the end.

**SB 588 - Carozza Testimony\_FINAL.pdf**

Uploaded by: Senator Mary Beth Carozza

Position: FAV

MARY BETH CAROZZA  
*Legislative District 38*  
Somerset, Wicomico,  
and Worcester Counties

Education, Energy, and  
the Environment Committee



*Annapolis Office*  
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Executive Nominations Committee

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 5, 2025

**The Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee**  
**SB 588 – Education – Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and**  
**Varsity Teams – Designation (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)**  
**Statement of Support by Bill Sponsor Senator Mary Beth Carozza**

Thank you Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and my distinguished colleagues on the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee for this opportunity to present Senate Bill 588, the Fairness in Girls' Sports Act. I want to thank Chair Feldman and his staff for all their efforts to ensure we have an informative, productive hearing.

SB 588 would simply ensure a level playing field for girls' sports by only allowing biological girls (born female) to play on high school interscholastic and intramural junior varsity and varsity teams designated as a girls', female, or women's team or sport. I wholeheartedly believe this legislation is needed so female high school student athletes in Maryland can compete on a safe, level-playing field with opportunities to earn scholarships, medals, and records.

This bill protects the hard-earned opportunities for girls to compete in organized high school sports fairly and safely, and to earn athletic awards and scholarships, just as I did as a student athlete. I played varsity high school tennis for four years at Stephen Decatur High School in the number one girls' single position for four years.

By holding that position at the high school level, I then had opportunities to compete in regional and state tournaments that put me in the strongest position to be considered for a college athletic scholarship. As a result, I was offered and accepted a tennis scholarship to play for The Catholic University of America, a scholarship that was a lifeline for helping my family to pay for the cost of my college, where I played in the number three girls' single position and number one girls' doubles position for all four years.

Had one of the top-ranking biological boys from the boys' tennis team at my high school decided to play for my girls' high school tennis team, I would have been displaced from the number one position on the girls' tennis team and would have been denied opportunities to compete in state and regional tournaments, which are competitions that colleges follow when they are interested in recruiting student athletes and offering scholarships.

Simply put, being displaced from my number one girls' tennis singles position would have denied my opportunity to earn a college tennis scholarship, after spending years of practice, hours on end in the summer playing on the hard courts, running for miles, doing wind sprints,

competing in local, state, and regional tournaments, along with years of sacrifices made by my family, mainly my Mom, to support my dream of playing collegiate tennis.

My story and the story of thousands of Maryland women who played competitive sports in high school and earned a college athletic scholarship underscore the need for this legislation.

Women fought too long and too hard to earn equal athletic opportunities. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, women began fighting for their own space in sports, and through tremendous effort and hard-won accomplishments, we were able to enact Title IX on June 23, 1972, which was designed to eliminate discrimination against girls and women in education and athletics.

Before Title IX, only 294,000 girls played high school sports compared to 3.7 million boys. In 2019, 3.4 million girls participated in high school sports compared to 4.5 million boys. We have made immense progress, and we should not undermine that progress by allowing boys to take away the opportunities of girls by playing on girls' high school teams.

I do think it's important for this Committee to know that the participation of girls playing sports is not keeping up with the number of boys playing high school sports. In 2023, the number of girls participating in high school sports remained steady at 3.4 million, but the number of boys participating in high school sports increased to 4.6 million. Having comparatively 100,000 fewer girls participating in sports at the high school level is troubling.

The lack of fairness on the field of play inherently impacts performance and safety on the field of play. Several female athletes have been severely injured since biological males have been allowed to play in girls' sports with girls' regulations. For example in 2022, 17-year-old Payton McNabb, playing high school volleyball in North Carolina, was struck by a spiked ball during a volleyball game by a biological male on the opposing team. As a result, she suffered a concussion and neck injury. Like all student athletes, Payton was aware of the possibility of injury in contact sports, but she describes her experience on the volleyball court that day as violent. She was knocked unconscious and lay in a fencing position – an involuntary posture that occurs with head impacts – for over 30 seconds. Payton still suffers from partial paralysis, vision and cognitive issues, and constant headaches.

We want to prevent stories like Payton's in Maryland. As more incidences occur and spread, girls are becoming more cautious on the field of play to prevent long-term injuries. When a girl plays against a biological male, they are not simply playing against another player. They are playing against someone who is generally stronger, faster, and could really hurt them.

In response to the concerns raised during the hearing last year, I made two changes to SB 588 to address some of the opposition's concerns. First, we clarified that this bill only impacts girls' teams. Teams or sports that are designated as mixed or boys' teams would remain open categories for anyone regardless of biological sex or gender identity to try out, practice, and play. Second, SB 588 no longer includes the language from last year's bill that schools may bring a civil suit against another school and could recover monetary damages, attorney's fees, and any other relief. That section from last year's bill has been eliminated.

We have always acknowledged that there are differences between boys and girls, especially on the field of play. It's why we have girls' teams in the first place. Boys have enjoyed the many benefits that come with participating in sports, from leadership, confidence, cooperation, conflict resolution and so much more. We cannot deny these same benefits to girls, especially when girls who participate in sports are also less likely to suffer from breast cancer, experience depression, remain in a violent relationship, do drugs, become pregnant, and are more likely to graduate than girls who do not play sports.

In 2020, we celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, voting rights for women. Here we are today considering legislation to ensure that women have a fair playing field in sports. We should be allowed to preserve our history, keep our opportunities in girls' sports, and enjoy the many benefits that come from participating in sports.

The other side contends that this Fairness in Girls Sports bill discriminates against trans athletes. That could not be further from the truth. Trans athletes can play boys, coed, and intramural sports.

Allowing biological boys to play girls sports discriminates against biological girls. Maryland's girls deserve to play girls sports on an even playing field. That's why this bill is called the Fairness in Girls' Sports Act.

I truly am grateful for this opportunity to present SB 588, and I look forward to working with this Committee to ensure that we keep fairness in girls' sports now and in the future for our Maryland daughters, nieces, granddaughters and great granddaughters. I urge a favorable report on SB 588.

**FAVORABLE SB588.pdf**

Uploaded by: Shannon Ballard

Position: FAV

To the members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee:

With regard to SB 588, the Fairness in Girls' Sports Act, I **STRONGLY SUPPORT** quick passage of this bill to protect girls competing in junior varsity & varsity sports throughout Maryland!

This bill is common sense. It should not be a difficult issue to ensure fairness and safety for female athletes. Female athletes should only compete against and share private spaces with females. We have worked way too long for equal opportunities to have the feelings of men usurp our rights & opportunities. Co-ed athletics and open-category teams continue to offer inclusive options without harming our female athletes.

Please do the right thing & protect women-only spaces, including on sports teams. Protect our daughters. Protect our granddaughters. Protect Women's Rights!

# **Maryland SB588 2025 Support - Save Women's Sports**

Uploaded by: Sharon Byrne

Position: FAV



Maryland SB588 - Fairness in Girls' Sports Act

Written Testimony from [Women's Liberation Front](#)

Submitted Mar 3, 2025

### **Our Position: SUPPORT**

Women's Liberation Front (WoLF) is a national radical feminist, non-partisan, non-profit dedicated to restoring, defending and advancing the rights of women and girls.

We support SB588.

Female-only sports are incredibly important because they ensure that women and girls will continue to have opportunities related not just to winning sporting events, but opportunities to advance their educational opportunities and careers.

On average, females are smaller, weaker, and slower than males. This statement is not meant to diminish the amazing capabilities of the female sex. It is merely a fact based on biological reality. In competitive athletics, women and girls, on average, are at a serious disadvantage when they are forced to compete against men and boys. It is incredibly unfair to force women and girls to compete against males.

When female athletes are forced to compete against males who try to present themselves as females on teams, girls are deprived of titles, records, medals, scholarships, and opportunities to win, or participate, fairly and safely. All across the country, and globally, men and boys have taken advantage of being allowed to identify as female in order to enter and win athletic competitions against women and girls. When these boys and men win, they not only win accolades and prizes, but they also take away scholarship opportunities and career advancement opportunities for women and girls. The website shewon.org tracks losses by female athletes to males pretending to be women. Over 1,000 medals have been lost to more than 700 females, awarded to men

who identified as women in order to compete against them. In no world is this fair to women and girls.

SB588 defines sex correctly as biological sex. It seeks to protect girls in Maryland public schools, and those on teams in non-public schools who play against public school teams by ensuring they don't have to compete with boys on their teams. It also offers a co-ed option for everyone who wants to play.

I urge Maryland's leaders to support SB588 because this bill will ensure a fair playing field for girls throughout the state. Maryland's girls, and all girls, deserve the chance to play sports and win games and competitions on a level playing field, which is to compete against other girls.

Thank you for reviewing our testimony. WoLF is available to serve as a resource for you if you have questions or would like more information about the importance of single-sex sports, or any topic related to gender ideology and sex-based inequalities.

Written testimony prepared by:

Sharon Byrne  
Executive Director  
Women's Liberation Front  
[executivedirector@womensliberationfront.org](mailto:executivedirector@womensliberationfront.org)

**SB 0588 Fairness in Girls' Sports Act.pdf**

Uploaded by: SHARON CARRICK

Position: FAV



Ella Ennis, Legislative Chairman  
Maryland Federation of Republican Women  
PO Box 6040, Annapolis MD 21401  
Email: eee437@comcast.net

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chairman  
and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee  
Senate of Maryland  
Annapolis, Maryland

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members:

RE: **SB0588** – Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams and Sports – Designation (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act) -- **SUPPORT**

The 1,154 members of the Maryland Federation of Republican Women most strongly supports SB 0588 to limit membership on interscholastic and intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity teams to biological females.

**We cannot wait for potentially life-altering injuries to our female high school athletes before acknowledging what research has proven repeatedly. Current and future generations of high school female athletes are relying on us to preserve for them a safe playing field.**

The Maryland General Assembly's 2015 "Report of the Task Force to Study Sports Injuries in High School Female Athletes" found that anatomical, neuromuscular, hormonal, and developmental differences between female and male athletes can place the female at higher risk of injury.

<https://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc5300/sc5339/000113/021000/021772/>

A 2021 report in the Journal of Functional Morphology and Kinesiology entitled "A Comparison Between Male and Female Athletes in Relative Strength and Power Performances" reported that significantly greater muscle thickness and muscle length in males play an important role in determining the maximum contraction velocity of the muscle and the range of active force production. The study reported that muscle strength of females is typically 40% to 75% that of males.

<https://www.mdpi.com/2411-5142/6/1/17>

A 2018 report by the National Library of Medicine (Sex Differences in Common Sports Injuries) and a 2023 report by Yale New Haven Health (How Teen Girls Can Prevent Sports Injuries) both concluded that biological males enjoy physical superiority over biological females, resulting in greater susceptibility by females to certain sports injuries.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6138566/>  
<https://www.ynhhs.org/articles/how-teen-girls-can-prevent-sports-injuries>

Please give a **FAVORABLE** report to **SB0588**.

Sincerely,  
Ella Ennis  
Legislative Chairman

**SB 0588 smcarrick.pdf**

Uploaded by: SHARON CARRICK

Position: FAV

**SB 0588 – SUPPORT**

Fairness in Girls' Sport Act

My daughter was a school athlete in Queen Anne's County and my granddaughters are currently school athletes in Montgomery County. As a parent and grandparent of girls who have and will continue to participate in school athletics, I fully support this bill.

The scientific evidence is everywhere. Male physiology ensures a competitive advantage for the biological male over females. More importantly, the danger of significant injury to female team members is significant.

Sharon Maenner Carrick  
Mitchellville MD

# **SWW\_Leg MD SB 588\_ Amie Ichikawa Written Testimony**

Uploaded by: Amie Ichikawa

Position: FWA

## **Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee**

Senate Bill 588, "Fairness in Girls' Sports Act"

Position: Favorable

March 5, 2025

Dear Member of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

My name is Amie Ichikawa. I am an ambassador for Independent Women and the founder of Woman II Woman, a support group for incarcerated women, and I urge you to support Maryland Senate Bill 588, the Fairness in Girls' Sports Act.

I served nearly five years in the Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla, one of the largest women's prisons in the country. During that time, I personally experienced how vital it is to have single-sex spaces for the safety, privacy, and rehabilitation of incarcerated women. When California passed Senate Bill 132—the so-called "Transgender Respect, Agency, and Dignity Act"—in 2020, it allowed male inmates to transfer into women's prisons, even if they had not undergone any "gender-affirming" treatment. I began receiving desperate calls, letters, and emails from women still in prison, begging for help as men were being placed in their cells and their lives were turned upside down.

Women in prison already live in conditions where privacy is almost nonexistent. Now, they are being forced to share small, overcrowded spaces with men, including those with violent criminal histories and no intention of transitioning. These are not hypothetical concerns. I know of a male inmate who was isolated in a men's prison for assaulting his bunkmates but was transferred directly into a women's general population cell with seven women.

The Fairness in Girls' Sports Act is a necessary first step to protect women and girls in Maryland. Without clear protections, policies that prioritize ideology over reality will continue to endanger the safety, privacy, and rights of women.

We all want to ensure the rights of all are protected, but when men invade women's spaces, like prisons or sports, women are disproportionately harmed and their rights are discarded in the name of inclusion. You can be both for equality and single-sex sports.

This issue is deeply personal for me. I know what it's like to live in a cell where privacy is a luxury and safety is a constant concern. I know the fear of being unable to escape, of not being listened to when you ask for help. But I also

know the importance of standing up for those who cannot stand up for themselves.

This is why it is necessary to pass the Fairness in Girls' Sports Act to ensure a level playing field for girls' sports.

I urge this committee to pass Senate Bill 588, and I urge it to include protections at the collegiate level to protect women's rights and restore fairness and safety for all female athletes.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Amie Ichikawa  
*Ambassador*  
*Independent Women*

# **SWW\_Leg MD SB 588\_ Kim Russell Written Testimony .**

Uploaded by: Kim Russell

Position: FWA

## **Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee**

Senate Bill 588, "Fairness in Girls' Sports Act"

Position: Favorable

March 5, 2025

Dear Members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

I am Coach Kim Russell, Ambassador at Independent Women and advocate for women and girls. I am writing to you today to urge you to support Senate Bill 588, the Fairness in Girls' Sports Act. Women's sports have been my life and my passion. In college, I played two sports at the DI level, and I have been a women's lacrosse coach for 29 years. I have been inducted into three halls of fame for my contributions to the game of lacrosse and was appointed to the Women in Sports Commission for World Lacrosse (the governing body for the sport of lacrosse worldwide) in 2024.

Many of my players affectionately refer to me as the "Hippie Love Coach," not only because I'm a yoga instructor, am often barefoot, read energy, and coach intuitively, but because I've given countless individuals a safe space to thrive and feel a sense of belonging.

I've coached running down the sideline while nursing one child, with another in a backpack, while a third runs with me. I am a woman, through and through.

Never in a million years did I think I would be fighting to get back the rights that were given to women and girls.

When I accepted the job as Head Women's Lacrosse Coach & Wellness Instructor at Oberlin in August of 2018, I was so excited to be a part of an institution known for its academic rigor, open-minded dialogue, and freedom to express oneself. And then, I learned the truth. Oberlin—like many institutions of higher-ed these days—only supports free speech when your values align with theirs.

I learned this firsthand when I spoke out against males competing in women's sports.

Without protections, opportunities to compete are taken away from women—to say nothing of trophies and awards. Because schools do not want to be accused of sex discrimination, many will choose to stay silent. No school should have to choose between doing what's right and protecting their reputation. Senate Bill 588 shields schools from unjust accusations while upholding fairness in sports.

Recent polling from the New York Times shows 79% of Americans [believe](#) men should not compete in women's sports.

I will never apologize for believing that women and girls should have the right to single sex competition. I'm hoping that my speaking up will give other coaches, administrators, faculty, parents, and athletes the courage to do the same.

At the very least, coaches and administrators must stop telling young women to stay silent and accept losing (or losing a spot) to a male. They must stop telling young women to accept having a fully intact male in their locker rooms.

You, Committee members, have the opportunity to be heroes. This is about upholding truth, preserving the dreams of female athletes, and protecting women's sports. I hope you will act to do so. Please vote yes for Senate Bill 588 and include protections for college sports to ensure fairness for all athletes.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Coach Kim Russell  
*Ambassador*  
*Independent Women*

# **SWW\_Leg\_MD\_ Riley Gaines Senate Bill 588 Written T**

Uploaded by: Riley Gaines

Position: FWA

## **Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee**

Senate Bill 588, "Fairness in Girls' Sports Act"

Position: Favorable

March 5, 2025

Dear Member of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

My name is Riley Gaines, and I am an Ambassador for Independent Women. I urge you to pass Senate Bill 588 and include protections for women's college athletics.

Prior to joining Independent Women, I was a student at the University of Kentucky where I was a member of UK's Women's Swim and Dive Team. I proudly finished my career as a 12x NCAA All-American, 5x SEC champion, SEC record holder in the 200 butterfly making me the 10th fastest American of all time in the event, and 2x Olympic trial qualifier.

Many of you know my story. On March 17th, 2022, my teammates and I, as well as female swimmers from universities around the country, were forced to compete against a male named Lia Thomas. Thomas was allowed to compete in the women's division after competing as a member of the University of Pennsylvania Men's Swim Team for three years. We watched on the side of the pool as Thomas swam to a national title in the 500-yard freestyle, beating out the most impressive and accomplished female swimmers in the country, including Olympians and American record holders. (Previously, Thomas had been ranked in the 400ths—at best—in the men's division.)

When I raced Thomas in the 200-yard freestyle, we tied. We ended up with the same time—down to the hundredth of a second. Having only one trophy, the NCAA handed it to Thomas and told me I would go home empty-handed because Thomas needed to hold the trophy for photo purposes. I was shocked. I felt betrayed and belittled, reduced to a photo-op. But my feelings did not matter. What mattered to the NCAA were the feelings of a male.

I can attest to the tears that I witnessed from finishers who missed being named an All-American by one place. I can attest to the extreme discomfort in the locker room from 18-year-old girls exposed to male body parts and having to undress with a male watching in the same room. I can attest to the anger and frustration expressed by girls who had worked so hard and

sacrificed so much to get to this moment, only to have to compete in what felt like a farce. And I can attest to the fact that, around the country, female athletes who protested the inclusion of Lia Thomas in the women's division were threatened, intimidated, and emotionally blackmailed into silence and submission.

By allowing Thomas to join the women's swim team and compete in women's collegiate meets, the University of Pennsylvania, the Ivy League, and the colleges and universities that hosted Thomas at these meets prevented other women from competing at all, subjected female swimmers to a loss of privacy and dignity, inflicted emotional harm on female swimmers, and suppressed the free speech rights of female students to advocate for their rights.

***Unfortunately, my story and the experiences of D1 swimmers are not unique. Across the country, and across various sports, female athletes, particularly at the college and high school level, are losing not only awards but opportunities to compete at all. Over 800 females have been displaced by males competing in women's sporting events.***

By passing Senate Bill 588 you ensure that this same harm does not happen to the females competing in high school varsity and junior varsity girls' sports, and these same protections are needed at the collegiate level as well.

Those who advocate for males in women's sports often speak about "compassion" and "inclusion." In and of themselves, these are important virtues, but let me be clear, it is not "compassionate" to force a young woman to undress in front of a naked man. It's not "inclusive" to ask girls to smile and step aside so that males can take their podium spots.

***Schools must not be allowed to continue discriminating against female athletes. And where they have discriminated, they must be held accountable.***

Allowing males to compete in women's sports is unfair to women, who have fought for their spot on their team and for the opportunity to compete on the junior varsity or varsity level. And it is unfair because of the stark, athletic differences between men and women, where the severity of potential injury at the hands of a male athlete is immense, and where opportunities and resources for women are already extremely scarce.

***Maryland currently has no protections for women's sports. This bill is a step in the right direction for ensuring female opportunities, rights, and***

***safety are a priority. I hope you join the other 26 states that have some protections for women's sports.***

I urge you to pass Senate Bill 588 on behalf of the over 3 million women and girls in Maryland and consider including collegiate sports.

Thank you.

# **SWW\_Leg MD SB 588\_ Victoria Royer Coley Written Te**

Uploaded by: Victoria Coley

Position: FWA

## **Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee**

Bill: SB588- Fairness in Girls' Sports Act

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Dear Members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

I was born and raised in Annapolis, Maryland. I began playing girls' youth sports at the gentle age of five playing at Pal Park and on the fields adjacent to Annapolis Middle School. Growing up, my girlfriends and I played soccer, lacrosse, and basketball. It was a wonderful foundational opportunity to gain incredible physical and social skills, and self-esteem. Sports have been an incredible part of my life and helped shape the strong woman that I am today.

I competed in sports through high school and went on to play lacrosse in college in South Carolina.

I urge you to vote for Maryland's women and girls—including my young daughter and the generations of girls to come. Stand with women and girls. We are not an after thought. Women and girls should not have to step aside, sacrificing common sense and fairness in favor of a radical version of "inclusion."

There has been a national mandate from the American people to save women's sports — including overwhelming bipartisan support here in Maryland.

Every time an athlete born male gets a roster spot on a women's team there is an athlete born female who is denied an opportunity to compete. It does not matter if that athlete born male ultimately doesn't win anything. There was still an athlete born female who was forced out. This is discrimination on the basis of sex.

### **We must not let women and girls in Maryland be sidelined.**

Competitive sport is a zero-sum game, where some athletes make the cut, others do not; someone wins, others lose. In a zero-sum competition, the inclusion of male athletes in women's sports inevitably means FEMALE LOSE OUT.

The science is clear: testosterone suppression cannot eliminate the male athletic advantage. Independent Women's Law Center has produced an authoritative report, [Competition Report](#), that documents this male athletic advantage. The report collects scientific studies showing that males have

larger hearts and lungs, different skeletal structures, more hemoglobin, and more muscle mass on average than females. These differences only grow as children do, and puberty confers a significant and lasting advantage that can never be fully reversed-even with hormone therapy.

SB588 will safeguard female sports and locker rooms at the high school level, but it should also protect athletes at the collegiate level where the physical differences, risks of injury, and potential opportunities (including recruitment, scholarships, titles, and awards) are greatest. It should cover both public and private universities.

I also urge the Committee to add a provision that states, "No school shall participate in any athletic activity designated for students of the female sex with or against a team that the school knows or, to a reasonable degree of certainty believes, has on the team a student of the male sex."

Thank you for taking these requests seriously and for taking a vote soon so we know who stands with women, and who does not.

Sincerely,

**Victoria Royer Coley**

vrcoley@gmail.com

443.758.6077

Vice President of Communications  
Independent Women

# **2025 - SB0588 Written Testimony Fairness in Girls**

Uploaded by: Ayla Hurley

Position: UNF

Ayla Hurley  
6385 Windharp Way  
Columbia, MD 21045  
District 13

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF SB 0588, Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams and Sports - Designation (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)

2/18/2025

TO: Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

FROM: Ayla Hurley

Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, my name is Ayla Hurley and I've resided in Maryland my entire life. Supporters of SB 0588 say that it is “not about trans people,” but by attempting to narrow the scope to “biological sex,” it inherently will unfairly impact trans people - which is precisely what supporters of this bill are hoping for. It’s obtusely-veiled transphobia under the guise of protecting girls at the expense of the most vulnerable girls. Those opposing this bill are those who would’ve been directly affected by it as kids, who are raising trans athletes, and professionals providing widely-accepted recommendations from the top medical and psychological associations in our country.

In my time as a volunteer counselor for the largest queer-focused youth crisis center in the US, I know deeply how bills like this directly contribute to trans youth struggling with their mental health. I have conversed with people as young as eleven who know that they are “different,” and whose only wish is to be accepted as they are. Instead, adults in their lives, on TV, and in government suddenly accuse them of being malicious predators when finding out that they’re not the sex they were assigned at birth. I’ve talked kids off bridges. I’ve talked them out of the pills in the cabinet. I’ve talked them into moving the knife away from their wrist - “how would it feel to go on a walk right now? We can keep talking. I’m here for you.”

May you never have to have that conversation - but roughly **half** of transgender and nonbinary youth considered suicide in the last year, according to the Trevor Project’s 2023 National Survey on Mental Health of LGBTQ Young People. These bills tell them that they don’t get to know who they are; that they’re malicious actors, simply for trying to ease the discomforts they feel in their minds and bodies. Trans kids just want to be kids, like all of their peers.

Youth sports are supposed to be a place to learn the values of teamwork and community. Without an affirming community of support, according to a study by Ryan, et al. in 2009, transgender and nonbinary youth are eight times more likely to report attempting suicide. The disturbing thought that the Delegates who introduced this bill care more about their flawed understanding of sex and gender, than that those kids might try to kill themselves, is upsetting on a deep level. Let ALL kids be kids. Please do not pass this blatantly discriminatory bill. Thank you.

# **SB588 Testimony - Bee Cigna.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brynn Cigna

Position: UNF

**Senate Bill 588: Education – Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams 2 and Sports – Designation 3 (Fairness in Girls’ Sports Act)**

**Position: UNFAVORABLE**

**Submitted by Brynn “Bee” Cigna**

Hello, my name is Brynn Cigna, but please refer to me as Bee. I’m submitting this written testimony before the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee. The Fairness in Girls’ Sport Act is a blatant example of anti-trans rhetoric that has been plaguing our country since the start of the 2020s. This act violates Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX prohibits sex discrimination in federally funded education programs and applies to all educational institutions in the United States of America.

In essence and beyond its anti-trans position, this act jeopardizes the safety of girls participating in public and nonpublic school sports. This act only applies to girls or those we deem to be ‘of the female sex’. I question to the committee on why this act is solely directed at women and girls, will an identical bill be submitted that prevents trans boys from participating in interscholastic and intramural sports with cisgender boys? This act follows the same playbook as other anti-trans legislation, thinly veiled as a promise to “protect women and girls” while promoting discrimination against trans people.

I question the committee on how this act would be enforced. According to Section A, Line 2, “student of the female sex” means a student whose biological sex is female. This act ignores over a century worth of research towards and lived experiences of intersex people. According to then Center for American Progress, “intersex” is defined as an umbrella term used to describe people born with sex traits that do not fit binary medical definitions of male or female sexual or reproductive anatomy. Examples of intersex conditions include but are not limited to: Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome, Swyer Syndrome, Turner Syndrome, and Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia. The four intersex conditions I have listed result in the intersex individual presenting as “typically female”.

To implement this act, I question the committee if schools will be obligated to perform medical tests to “ensure” that the girls and women who are interested in playing sports are students “of the female sex” as defined by the act. Will they be subjected to chromosomal tests, hormonal tests? Will they be subjected to having their genitalia examined to ensure that they are “students of the female sex” as outlined per this act’s definition? Will they, against their will and the privacy protections offered by HIPPA [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996], disclose their sex assignment to their schools?

In addition to the discrimination against trans, intersex, and AFAB [assigned female at birth] individuals, this act sets up the refusal for girls who are cisgender and who had been assigned female at birth because of PCOS. Abbreviated for Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome, this is the one of most common hormonal condition among women and AFAB individuals of reproductive age

with an estimated one out of ten women possessing the condition. Part of this condition involves having excess androgens, aka male hormones, that falls outside of binary “male” and “female” testosterone levels and can be considered under the umbrella of intersex. However, the medical community at large and many individuals with PCOS don’t consider the condition to be an intersex condition; many individuals with PCOS consider themselves as cisgender women. With that outlined, with girls with PCOS—a condition that occurs in 10% of the world’s female population—be subjected to rejection by this act?

As you approach the end of my testimony, I would like to reveal something to you: I am non-binary and someone with PCOS. While I was assigned female at birth, it did not allow with my identity. Unfortunately, the United States federal government doesn’t recognize me as so, I still am intersex per my hormone levels because of PCOS. I played intramural soccer from elementary school to middle school, then intramural softball in the latter half of middle school and high school. My PCOS traits began to appear while I was a young teenager. Had I been subjected to the rules of this act, would I have been thrown out? Would you—this committee, the sponsors of this bill—denied me this opportunity to participate with my peers?

Beyond this bill, your legislative focus on restricting trans youth’s freedom to engage in traditional youth activities is misguided. You are unaware about the number of trans youth participating in Maryland’s high schools interscholastic and intramural sports; however, according to Director of Research at Athlete Ally Anna Baeth, it’s estimated that fewer than 40 of athletes in the National Collegiate Athletic Association are known to be transgender, out of more than 500,000 total athletes. That’s 0.008% of known trans athletes at a national level. I urge you to complanate the amount of effort enforcing this bill will require, in comparison to the rate of trans athletes in the state of Maryland.

I thank you for this time and I conclude my testimony with a final message: trans youth, trans adults, trans elders, trans people of all backgrounds are under attack from multiple angles. The federal government is taking extreme actions to eradicate our existence from history and the present day. This bill contributes to the denial of trans people and our right to participate freely in society. As per the Declaration of Independence, Founding Father Thomas Jefferson wrote “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Trans people, trans youth, are entitled to the pursuit of happiness, which involves playing baseball or basketball with our peers on a sunny afternoon outside on our school fields. I urge you to acknowledge these principles and don’t deny them to trans people.

# **SB0588 - Fairness in Girls' Sports Act - Written T**

Uploaded by: Charlotte Hoffman

Position: UNF



Charlotte Persephone Hoffman, Esq.  
(they/she)  
Policy Director  
charlotte@transmaryland.org

Wednesday March 5, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman  
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Testimony of Trans Maryland

**IN OPPOSITION TO**

**Senate Bill #588:** Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams - Designation Based on Sex (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)

To the Chair, Vice Chair, and esteemed members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee:

Trans Maryland is a multi-racial, multi-gender community power building organization for Maryland's trans community. In that capacity we work with transgender young people all across the state, as well as their families, friends, and classmates. Since 2021, we have seen unprecedented attacks on trans youth across the country, at both the state and federal level. While Maryland has thus far resisted joining the bandwagon of anti-trans legislation, legislation like Senate Bill 588 demonstrates that not even Maryland is free from this wave of anti-trans rhetoric. We are deeply saddened—and, indeed, embarrassed—to see elected Maryland legislators targeting young trans girls with this legislation.

We'd first like to address comments to any young trans or intersex girls who read this testimony. The actions of the adult legislators who have brought this bill to the legislature are born out of fear and bigotry. Trans Maryland wants you to know that transgender and cisgender adults alike find this legislation targeting you to be in bad faith, a misunderstanding of science and biology, and an openly bigoted act against young trans and intersex girls and women like yourself who just want to have fun by enjoying the many health and wellness benefits of playing youth sports.

Since the passage of the Fairness for All Marylanders Act more than a decade ago, gender identity has been a protected class under Maryland law. These protections were reinforced in educational settings in 2022 with the passage of House Bill 850/Senate Bill 666, which prohibits schools from discriminating against students on the basis of a number of protected classes, including gender identity. Senate Bill 588 would fly in the face of established Maryland law, instructing Maryland's schools not to discriminate against transgender students, *except in this particular instance*. In addition, the bill would also bring schools out of compliance with MPSSA's



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Transgender Person Guidance for Participation in Interscholastic Athletics, as well as the MSDE's Non-Discrimination Guidelines for Student Transitions.

More crucially, Senate Bill 588 also exhibits a fundamental misunderstanding of the concept of biological sex, which it frames as a simple, easily identifiable, binary. This is far from true.

Proponents of Senate Bill 588 would tell you that biological sex is determined at birth (or even, as a recent Trump Administration executive order would have it, at conception<sup>1</sup>), that sex is a binary, and that sex is static from birth until death. These beliefs are not only outdated, they also manifest a misunderstanding of scientific facts and realities that not only denies the existence of transgender people, but also erases the lived experiences of intersex people, a group that includes about 2% of the total population. Contrary to claims from the bill's proponents, sex does not fit neatly into two distinct boxes and there is no single test that could be performed to assign everyone into one of those boxes.

More crucially, Senate Bill 588 is also built on the sexist fallacy that all people assigned male at birth are inherently superior at athletics to all people assigned female at birth. This is the attitude that leads a significant percentage of men to believe that they could go toe-to-toe with Serena Williams, one of the greatest tennis players who has ever lived. But, because she is a *woman*, many men believe they are inherently better than her, regardless of whether they have ever played tennis before in their lives.<sup>2</sup> Biological sex does not on its own impart a permanent benefit to participation in sports, especially when compared to the extreme deviations in athletic prowess caused by other biological or sociological factors.

Much ink has been spilled, for instance, on Michael Phelps, a cisgender endosex (non-intersex) male athlete and 23 time gold medalist, who was born with the ability for his body to produce half the lactic acid than the body of a typical athlete. Less lactic acid provides a significantly faster recovery time, and is a key factor in his dominance of his sport. And yet no legislators have targeted him, despite him being born into a body that "unfairly" benefits his athletic prowess and permits dominance of his sport. Similarly, we do not care that the athletes who most often succeed on the world stage are those who are from socio-economic backgrounds that allow them to hire private trainers and pay for access to the best equipment and facilities.

On the other hand, South African runner Caster Semenya, who was assigned female at birth and has a vagina, has been attacked extensively over the past 15 years over elevated testosterone levels and speculation that she is intersex, and in 2018 the IAFF (now World

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<sup>1</sup> This claim is particularly ridiculous, as human embryos start out as female for the first seven weeks of gestation.

<sup>2</sup> See Emine Saner, *Why do so many men think they could win a point off Serena Williams?*, The Guardian (July 15, 2019), available at <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/shortcuts/2019/jul/15/why-do-so-many-men-think-they-could-win-a-point-off-serena-williams>.



Charlotte Persephone Hoffman, Esq.  
(they/she)  
Policy Director  
charlotte@transmaryland.org

Athletics) adopted a rule on testosterone levels of middle distance runners that was targeted solely at Semenya and has excluded her from international competition since that time.

The disparity in treatment between Michael Phelps and Caster Semenya demonstrates that we only care about “biological fairness” when it comes to women’s sports, and that these fairness rules are often constructed through a white supremacist lens to empower middle class and upper class white women to defeat their opponents of color.

Indeed, the very idea that men and women could never compete in sports is built on racist, eugenicist ideas from the 19th and early 20th centuries. Via the scholarship of Dr. Kyla Schuller, we understand the 19th century focus on the discernable differences between a binary set of sexes was focused around the concept that there were large differences between white men and women, and that People of Color had less of a difference between the binary sexes due to a “lack of civilization”. The white colonial theories of the time supposed that high distinctions between the sexes was endemic to white people only and People of Color were less separate sexes that could become more civilized through adherence to white colonization and homemaking/hyper masculinity. The eugenicist movement in the early 20th century sought to eliminate “undesirables,” which included People of Color, Jews, neurodivergent people, and more. Trans and intersex girls have simply become the most recent front of these eugenicist attitudes.

The irony is that Senate Bill 588’s greatest impact will not be on transgender girl athletes in the state of Maryland, but rather on cisgender girl athletes who will find themselves subject to intrusive, dehumanizing, and traumatic medical examinations to prove the thing that they and everyone around them already know: that they are girls. And, as in so many other things, this burden will fall most harshly on girls of color, who are significantly more likely to be questioned on their gender presentation than their white peers. Whatever its aims, Senate Bill 588’s most lasting effect will be building up a system of racialized gender policing of Black and Brown girls and women.

Simply put, Senate Bill 588 is a solution in search of a problem, and in its search, it threatens to hamper the ability of all girls to participate fully in school life. The benefits of sports and participation in team sports is one that should not be unequally conferred to only cisgender endosex young people. The beauty of competition and participation in that competition has a long history of being limited by those requesting to ensconce their own biases, and codify their bigotry. It is particularly shameful when adults attempt to perpetrate this on our youth.

For these reasons **we urge an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 588.**

**SB588 - Girls Sports - Kastner - Unfav.pdf**

Uploaded by: Chloe Kastner

Position: UNF

March 3, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman  
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
3 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Testimony

**IN OPPOSITION OF**

**Senate Bill #588:** Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity  
Teams and Sports - Designation (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)

Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee,

I am writing to strongly urge an unfavorable report on SB0588, a bill that seeks to exclude transgender youth from participating in sports in alignment with their gender identity. The data overwhelming shows that transgender athletes do not pose a threat to fairness in girls' and women's sports, while the harm caused by exclusion is clear and measurable.

There are roughly 8 million student-athletes in U.S high schools and approximately 510,000 NCAA athletes at the collegiate level. NCAA president Charlie Baker testified that fewer than 10 NCAA athletes are transgender. A recent poll of states athletic bodies by Teen Vogue found only 17 trans girls playing sports at the high school level, averaging 2-3 per state. Even if we extrapolate from NCAA data, that suggests only around 160 trans athletes at that level.

In over a decade of allowing trans women to compete in NCAA athletics, only one openly transgender woman has ever won an NCAA Division 1 championship. Lia Thomas, a swimmer, won the 500-yard freestyle in 2022. Less publicized was her placement of 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> in her other races. Similarly, transgender athletes winning high school championships is exceedingly rare. A handful of highly publicized cases do not reflect a widespread competitive advantage, but rather highlight the disproportionate scrutiny placed on a tiny number of trans athletes, while million of cisgender athletes continue to win and thrive.

At the international level, the Olympics have allowed trans athletes to compete since 2004, yet there has been no dominance. In that time, we've had the much-publicized

appearance of New Zealand power lifter Laurel Hubbard, who failed to complete a single lift. The only gold medalist, Quinn, competed in soccer, a team sport. One thing that is clear from these results: being transgender is not a ticket to victory. Trans athletes win and lose just like anyone else and there is no “wave of transgender champions” taking over women’s sports. On the contrary, decades of inclusion have led to no measurable negative impact on competition.

Where there *is* measurable negative impact, however, is on the mental health of transgender youth in response to the continued attacks on their identity and wellbeing. Sports provide young people with opportunities to learn leadership, teamwork, self-esteem, discipline, and community belonging. These apply to ALL youth, including trans youth. LGBTQIA+ youth who participate in sports report lower rates of depression, one study finding a 20% reduction in depressive symptoms, compared to non LGBTQIA+ youth. Conversely, policies ostracizing children based on their identity leads to an increase in bullying, anxiety, and suicidal ideation. Research shows that in states with trans-inclusive policies, trans students were 14% less likely to have considered suicide in the past year. A 2016 study from the NIH that trans students denied access to gender-appropriate bathrooms were 45% more likely to attempt suicide.

The facts show that trans athletes pose no threat to fairness or opportunities in girls’ or women’s sports. There is no evidence of any dominant competitive advantage. Fear of trans athletes “taking over” are not supported by reality as evidenced by the years of inclusive policies producing no evidence of competitive harm. The limited success of trans athletes at the highest levels of competition further demonstrates no inherent advantage exists. SB0588 would solve a problem that does not exist while simultaneously stripping a very small and vulnerable population of the chance to participate in sports and find belonging.

Maryland SB0588 runs counter to the core mission of scholastic athletics, which are built on inclusion, teamwork, and personal growth. Inclusion benefits trans kids by reducing depression and suicide risk, without disadvantaging anyone else.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the committee to find an unfavorable report on SB0588.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Chloe Kastner

District 34B

# Senate Bill 588 Unfavorable 2025.pdf

Uploaded by: Debi Jasen

Position: UNF

**Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**  
**Senate Bill 588**  
**UNFAVORABLE**

Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee;

Please give Senate Bill 588 an Unfavorable report.

Discrimination against transgender people is at an all-time high, with transgender people being erased from history, and losing civil rights protections and healthcare. The government is now even allowed to spy on people simply for being Queer. This is yet another bill designed to harm transgender people. Additionally, this bill is nearly identical to House Bill 156, which received an unfavorable report. Even though the Ways and Means Committee has traditionally limited testimony on bills that are being reheard, including Chair-sponsored bills, the proponents of House Bill 156 threw a very public fit that they couldn't line up supporters to make blatantly bigoted, transphobic comments. Thus, a very slightly different bill is now being heard in your committee so that the haters can do as much as possible to harm transgender children.

Senate Bill 588 targets the handful of transgender athletes in the schools, and supporters will make those students out to be violent bullies. This bill also harms intersex students. There are more than two biological sexes, and intersex students don't fall into the male/ female biological sex designations of this bill. Their very existence doesn't match the scientifically incorrect ideology of transphobes, so they are erased completely. This bill would prevent intersex students from participating in school sports at all. This bill also ignores the many body size and strength differences among cisgender students. Since some students in JV sports have gone through puberty and some haven't, should schools be forced to divide students based on that rather than by age and grade? What about genetic mutations that can improve the performances of some athletes? Should they be disqualified from participating in sports? This bill doesn't bother to cover any of the many things that are more likely to affect performance than being transgender is. That is more evidence that this bill exists only to harm transgender people, especially children, putting them at higher risk of self-harm. As can be, and has been, said about a great many Republican policies throughout this country, the cruelty is the point.

Please reject bigotry by voting against Senate Bill 588. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Debi Jasen  
Pasadena, MD

# **HB0156 Education - Interscholastic and Intramural**

Uploaded by: Jeremy Browning

Position: UNF



**Maryland Commission  
on LGBTQIA+ Affairs**

**Bill Title:** Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams - Designation Based on Sex (Fairness In Girls' Sports Act)

**Bill Number(s):** [HB0156/SB0588](#)

**Position:** UNFAVORABLE

**Date:** March 3, 2025

**Submitted by:** Jeremy Browning, Director of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

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**To:**

House Ways and Means Committee

The Hon. Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair  
The Hon. Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Vice Chair

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

The Hon. Brian J. Feldman, Chair  
The Hon. Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair

**Testimony on behalf of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs:**

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, created by the Maryland General Assembly, works to serve LGBTQIA+ Marylanders by galvanizing community voices, researching and addressing challenges, and advocating for policies that advance equity and inclusion. The Commission envisions a Maryland where all LGBTQIA+ people can live full and authentic lives. As a vital resource, the Commission collaborates with public officials, agencies, and community partners to ensure the rights and dignity of LGBTQIA+ Marylanders are protected and respected.

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs is in strong opposition to House Bill 156/Senate Bill 588, Fairness in Girls' Sports Act. This proposed legislation, despite its name, does not promote fairness. Instead, it institutionalizes discrimination and exclusion against transgender and intersex women and girls in sports. Additionally, this approach not only disregards the rights and dignity of transgender women and girls but also places an undue emphasis on the bodies of all girls, women, and athletes assigned female at birth, potentially subjecting them to invasive and degrading physical examinations.

Leading medical institutions, such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Medical Association, and American Psychological Association, strongly support the inclusion of transgender youth in activities that align with their gender identity, recognizing the critical role

participation plays in mental health and overall well-being. Excluding transgender athletes is harmful and unsupported by evidence, as confirmed by these organizations.

We must emphasize that HB156/SB588 perpetuates stigma and discrimination against transgender and intersex individuals, further marginalizing them in areas that should foster growth, camaraderie, and opportunity.

For these reasons, the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs strongly urges an unfavorable report on HB156/SB588.

# **NASW Maryland - 2025 SB 588 UNF - Anti-Trans Sport**

Uploaded by: Karessa Proctor

Position: UNF

**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**

**March 5, 2025**

**Senate Bill 588**

**Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and  
Varsity Teams and Sports - Designation**

**\*\*\*OPPOSE\*\*\***

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers Maryland Chapter (NASW-MD), I write to express our strong opposition to Senate Bill 588: *Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams and Sports - Designation*.


This proposed legislation is part of a growing wave of harmful anti-LGBTQ+ and, more specifically, anti-transgender rhetoric that is being pushed across the country. These efforts are designed to foster division, promote disinformation, and create a hostile environment for transgender individuals. We are deeply concerned that SB 588 contributes to a broader pattern of discrimination and dehumanization, which directly threatens the well-being and rights of transgender people in our state.

Anti-trans sports bills like SB 588 do more than just restrict access to athletic opportunities; they lay the groundwork for a culture of exclusion, segregation, and social ostracism. These bills undermine basic principles of fairness, equity, and human dignity—values that are essential to Maryland’s diverse and inclusive communities.

As social workers, we know the profound impact that laws like SB 588 can have on mental health. Transgender individuals in our state already face disproportionately high rates of depression, anxiety, trauma, and suicidal ideation. Legislation that targets their identity and seeks to invalidate their experiences only exacerbates these challenges. Conversely, policies that promote inclusion and safety can have a transformative effect on their well-being.

Marylanders have already demonstrated their commitment to inclusivity through landmark legislation such as the Trans Health Equity Act. This bill reflects the values of compassion, respect, and equity that we hold dear. SB 588 is in direct contradiction to these values and would set a harmful precedent for discriminatory policies that have no place in our state.

*(over)*



As social workers, we also know that Maryland has urgent challenges that require our collective attention and resources. We must focus on addressing systemic disparities, such as racial and socioeconomic inequities, the opioid crisis, affordable housing shortages, and the ongoing fight to end the HIV epidemic. It is critical that we prioritize laws and policies that strengthen, rather than divide, our communities.

Rather than engaging in divisive and harmful rhetoric, we urge you to dedicate your efforts to the long-term solutions that will heal our communities and ensure all Marylanders have the opportunity to thrive.

We respectfully urge you to oppose SB 588 and to stand in support of the dignity, rights, and well-being of transgender Marylanders.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Karessa Proctor, BSW, MSW  
Executive Director, NASW Maryland Chapter

# **SB 588- Fairness in Girls Sports -UULM-MD-Oppose-K**

Uploaded by: Kari Alperovitz-Bichell

Position: UNF



## Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

### Testimony to OPPOSE

### **SB 588- Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams - Designation Based on Sex (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)**

TO: Chair Watson and members of the Economic Matters Committee  
FROM: Kari Alperovitz-Bichell, MD, MPH  
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland  
DATE: March 5, 2025

I am Kari Alperovitz-Bichell, MD, representing myself both as a physician and a person of faith representing the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland.

We urge you to OPPOSE **SB 588- Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams - Designation Based on Sex (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)**. This bill unnecessarily stigmatizes trans youth. This is a solution in search of a problem which was debunked in this article by Scientific American.<sup>1</sup> Trans youth are rare and likely to be taking puberty-delaying medication, which would take away any perceived “unfair” advantages due to the effects of testosterone,

However, this bill would also set up a system of asking the school to decide which youth are “biological girls.” As a medical doctor, I have questions about what mechanisms would be used and what protections would be put in place to protect children from false accusations and invasive exams done by people with dubious credentials.

As a primary care physician, I have provided gender affirming treatment. I have seen first hand how gender affirming care can be lifesaving. But, more fundamentally for me and my fellow Unitarian Universalists, I am called by the first principle of my faith to affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every human being.

This bill takes away the ability of trans youth to participate in an important aspect of high school. Participation in school sports can be an important coping mechanism for the stressors of High School. Unfortunately, participation in sports teams outside of schools are not always available to the poorest of our kids.

Therefore, we at UULM-MD urge you to oppose **SB 588**.

*Kari Alperovitz-Bichell, MD, MPH*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/trans-girls-belong-on-girls-sports-teams/>

**SB588 Oppose (Written).pdf**

Uploaded by: Kenzie Funk

Position: UNF



**Testimony in OPPOSITION of  
Senate Bill 588: Education – Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams and Sports –  
Designation (Fairness in Girls’ Sports Act)**

**Committee**

**Position: Unfavorable**

March 5, 2025

Strong Schools Maryland is a network of education advocates dedicated to ensuring the full funding and faithful implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future so every student in our state is equipped to thrive upon graduation. Strong Schools Maryland urges an **unfavorable vote on Senate Bill 588**, which if enacted, would legitimize hateful, transphobic, sexist policies and practices in public schools by embedding sex-based discrimination in sports programs.

The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future simply does not envision a transphobic system of public schools in the state. In fact, the oppressive hatred, bullying, and violence that would come about as a direct response to the passage of this bill would threaten any hope Marylanders have ever had about our schools being deemed “World-Class.” The bill displays a dangerous obsession with the developing, pubescent bodies of children and should be rejected by the entire General Assembly.

Senate Bill 588:

- Fails to define the problem that it aims to solve as there is no substantial evidence to suggest that current policies of gender inclusion in sports are causing problems;
- Advances a tried and failed, “separate but equal” narrative around participation in and designation of school-based student extracurricular activities;
- Forces schools to develop student athletic teams on the basis of sex, then prohibits government entities from receiving complaints about discrimination arising from this requirement;
- Seeks to force children into an either-or binary that is inconsistent with the experiences of ever-increasing numbers of students across the state; and
- Protects students and schools that discriminate against student participation on the athletic team of their choosing from retaliation or civil action; thereby codifying the legal ability to discriminate against anyone who violates this arbitrary, flawed rule about athletic participation.

There is no imminent threat to women’s sports, but the passage of this bill would contribute to active threats to the lives of transgender and gender-nonconforming Marylanders, especially to the physical and emotional safety of children. The American Medical Association specializing in pediatrics published an article in 2022 stating that **anti-transgender legislation is a public health concern for youth**; transgender youth are more likely to feel unsafe, experience bullying, and be injured by a weapon in schools.<sup>1</sup> Nationally,

80% transgender students have said they avoided bathrooms at school, 70% avoid school locker rooms, and 60% avoid participating in physical education classes, all due to safety concerns.<sup>2</sup>

These safety concerns are worsening in the current landscape. With both Federal and local threats to transgender and gender nonconforming youth increasing in proposed policy, we must act now to protect and include these student groups.<sup>3</sup> If we care about “saving sports” or “fair play,” Maryland ought to pursue athletic policies that are inclusive of trans students, which can have major benefits for transgender students and enrich the experiences of cisgender students.

The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future envisions a school system that is inclusive to *all* Maryland students. Senate Bill 588 not only is incompatible with this future-focused initiative, but also poses a tangible threat to transgender and gender nonconforming students. Policies such as SB588 will only hold us back from achieving the promises of the Blueprint and cause real harm for our students. Strong Schools Maryland champions for inclusion both on and off the field.

**For these reasons, we strongly urge an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 588.**

**For more information, contact Kenzie Funk [kenzie@strongschoolsmaryland.org](mailto:kenzie@strongschoolsmaryland.org)**

<sup>1</sup> [Anti-Transgender Legislation-A Public Health Concern for Transgender Youth.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [The Importance of Sports Participation for Transgender Youth](#)

<sup>3</sup> [The Epidemic of Violence Against the Transgender & Gender-Expansive Community in the US](#)

**SB588\_MSEA\_Lamb\_UNF.pdf**

Uploaded by: Lauren Lamb

Position: UNF

**UNFAVORABLE**

**Senate Bill 588**

**Education – Interscholastic and Intramural Teams and Sports – Designation Based on Biological Sex**

**Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment**

**March 5, 2025**

**Lauren Lamb**

**Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association opposes Senate Bill 588, which would, in practice, require certain school interscholastic and intramural athletic teams or sports to exclude some transgender students, prohibit adverse actions against a school or county board of education for maintaining separate interscholastic and intramural athletic teams and sports, and allow certain parties to bring civil action against schools, government entities, or athletic organizations based on noncompliance with provisions of this bill.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our nearly 900,000 students for the careers and jobs of the future. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

This bill would restrict students' eligibility to participate on certain school athletics teams based on a narrow characterization of biological sex. This would bar many transgender, intersex, and nonbinary students, whose gender identity may not align with their sex, from participating on the athletic teams that align with their gender identity and thus would effectively exclude some students from school athletics altogether. Policies that function to exclude transgender students from school sports are plainly discriminatory and harmful to students. Transgender, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming students are important members of our school communities and, like all students, deserve to be embraced, included, and treated with dignity.

It is well documented that transgender and gender nonconforming youth face increased rates of depression and suicidal ideation compared to their cisgender



peers, and that they are more likely to experience harassment and social alienation at school.<sup>12</sup> The American Academy of Pediatrics firmly opposes legislation that would prevent transgender students' participation on athletic teams that align with their gender identity, calling such bills "dangerous" and advising that "playing on sports teams helps youth develop self-esteem, correlates positively with overall mental health, and appears to have a protective effect against suicide."<sup>3</sup> We echo their condemnation of such policies, including those proposed in this bill. School policies play an undeniable role in students' wellbeing, and it is incumbent upon educators to develop and uphold research-based policies that affirm the dignity of all students.<sup>4</sup>

Proponents of this bill state that it intends to advance sex equality, but it would do the opposite. The 2020 *Bostock v. Clayton County* decision affirmed that anti-transgender discrimination *is* sex discrimination.<sup>5</sup> Like all Maryland students, transgender students deserve dignity, opportunity, and access at school, including in athletics.

### **We strongly urge the committee to issue an Unfavorable Report on Senate Bill 588.**

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<sup>1</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics (2018). Mental Health of Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Youth Compared With Their Peers. Retrieved January 2024, from

<https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/141/5/e20173845/37843/Mental-Health-of-Transgender-and-Gender>

<sup>2</sup> Morbidity and Mortality Weekly (2019). Transgender Identity and Experiences of Violence Victimization, Substance Use, Suicide Risk, and Sexual Risk Behaviors Among High School Students — 19 States and Large Urban School Districts. Retrieved January 2024, from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30677012/>

<sup>3</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics (2021). American Academy of Pediatrics Speaks Out Against Bills Harming Transgender Youth. Retrieved January 2024, from <https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/aap/2021/american-academy-of-pediatrics-speaks-out-against-bills-harming-transgender-youth/>

<sup>4</sup> National Association of School Psychologists (2016). Gender Inclusive Schools: Policy, Law, and Practice. Retrieved on January 2024, from <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/diversity-and-social-justice/lgbtq-youth/gender-inclusive-schools-faqs/gender-inclusive-schools-policy-law-and-practice>

<sup>5</sup> *Bostock v. Clayton County* (2020). Oyez. <https://www.oyez.org/cases/2019/17-1618>

**PPM-- SB 588--UNF.pdf**

Uploaded by: Luke Allen

Position: UNF

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Planned Parenthood of Maryland

**Committee:** Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

**Bill number:** SB 588 - Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams and Sports - Designation (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)

**Hearing Date:** March 5, 2024

**Position:** Oppose

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Planned Parenthood of Maryland strongly opposes *Senate Bill 588 - Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams and Sports - Designation (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)*. The bill requires public and private high schools to maintain single-sex sports teams, defines sex as biological, and creates a private right of action for students “deprived of an athletic opportunity” because of a violation of the law.

This bill does not create fairness in sports. It does perpetuate a history of stigma and discrimination against transgender and nonbinary students. The bill would also violate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. It has long been the position of the state of Maryland to affirm that Title IX prohibits discrimination against transgender students in any educational program or activity offered by a school.

In a 2022 survey, the Trevor Project found that nearly 1 in 5 transgender or nonbinary student had contemplated suicide during the past year.<sup>i</sup> The survey further finds that LGBTQ youth who found their school to be affirming reported lower rates of attempting suicide. Thus, we must oppose SB 588 and similar measures while continuing to work towards more supportive environments in schools for transgender and nonbinary youth.

As providers of gender-affirming care, we stand with our patients and ask for an unfavorable vote on SB 588. If we can provide any further information, please contact Erin Bradley, Vice President of Public Affairs, at [Erin.Bradley@ppm.care](mailto:Erin.Bradley@ppm.care) or (443) 604-3544.

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<sup>i</sup> [https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2022/assets/static/trevor01\\_2022survey\\_final.pdf](https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2022/assets/static/trevor01_2022survey_final.pdf)

**SB0588\_UNF\_mgoldstein 2025.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mathew Goldstein

Position: UNF



<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfU0l1WSdNHoXUz2uYdt4zf-ztmwuTz-rdKJ59WbJstj1Ylw/viewform>

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March 05, 2025

**SB 588 - UNF**

Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams -  
Designation Based on Sex (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)

Dear Chair Brian J. Feldman, Vice-Chair Cheryl C. Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

Although for many, even most, contexts transgender identity will take priority over potentially conflicting biological sex, in the sports competitions context it is biological sex that usually should take priority, starting sometime within the first few years immediately following puberty. One exception are biological females who have received male hormone treatments. They should be assigned to otherwise biological male only sport to protect other biological females from unfair competition. Also, biological males who have not undergone male puberty due to puberty blockers should be allowed to participate in otherwise biological female only sports. By accommodating such situations that are usually specific to trans individuals in our law, even though they are uncommon, we communicate to trans individuals that they are accepted members of our communities. Once so amended, a bill such as this that prioritizes biological sex for sports competitions is justified and should be enacted.

Testosterone during puberty results in taller heights, wider shoulders and longer arm-spans, narrower hips, larger bones and hearts, greater lung capacity, muscles that are easier to build and harder to lose with more resistant connective tissues, leaner body mass and higher levels of haemoglobin, the protein that carries oxygen within the blood. Post-puberty suppression of testosterone is slow to reverse the impact of male puberty and such post male puberty testosterone suppression does not reverse many of the physical changes that advantage males in sports competition. Because of the relevance of male hormones, biological females who have reached puberty and who refuse to reveal whether or not they have taken, or are taking, male hormone treatments, should be able to be blocked from participating in biological female only sports.

Activists on both sides of this issue tend to wrongly deny either the relevance of biological sex (based on testes or ovaries) or of gender identity (a cognitive and psychological based trait). Which one has priority when they conflict is context (and

also details) sensitive and to some extent different for biological males and biological females. In the sports competition context biological females with a DSD that results in high testosterone is also a possible issue that could be addressed. Some guidelines for individuals with ambiguous biological sex could also be included, but the large majority of people with a DSD are unambiguously male or female. Some simplification and compromise may be unavoidable given the real world complexity.

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Respectfully,  
Mathew Goldstein  
3838 Early Glow Ln  
Bowie, MD

# **Stallard SB0588 UNF Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Megan Stallard

Position: UNF

Good afternoon Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and honorable members of the committee.

My name is Megan Stallard, and I am a sophomore at Poolesville high school in Montgomery County. I am also a rock climber. I'm writing today to urge an **unfavorable** report on SB0588.

First, I would like to explain why it's simply not true that transgender women have an "unfair advantage" in sports. I am a cisgender female, and I'm objectively stronger than most other athletes on my rock climbing team, even the 18 year old cisgender male. I haven't trained significantly more than any of them; I've actually trained less than most of them. I simply have a genetic predisposition to building muscle faster, an "advantage". Should this disqualify me from competing in women's categories in rock climbing? If you answer that it shouldn't, you agree that the standard of "fairness" in sports is arbitrary; genetic factors influence all athletes' performance. Thus, the claim that allowing transgender women to compete in women's sports is "unfair" is based not in fact but in prejudice.

Any efforts to reduce the genetic advantage of trans athletes should come not through excluding them but through continuing to allow hormone therapy to be administered to minors by licensed medical professionals, which entails opposing SB0948. In fact, the Canadian Center for Ethics in Sport [reported](#) that trans women who have undergone hormone suppression do not have better performance than cis women.

Next, I would like to discuss one of the most pressing concerns with this legislation: its impact on the mental health of transgender people. As it stands, trans people are at an incredibly high risk for mental health problems due to the stigma and prejudice they face. In fact, 82% of trans individuals have experienced suicidal ideation, and 40% have attempted suicide, [according to NIH](#). [According to the Trevor Project](#), recent anti-trans legislation at the state level has negatively impacted the mental health of transgender and nonbinary people. And [experts](#) such as James McGraw from the University of Maryland Prevention Research Center believe that specifically anti-trans sports legislation has the potential to increase the risk of death by suicide among trans people. Senators, I ask you: is upholding an arbitrary standard of "fairness" in women's sports really worth risking the lives of so many transgender people?

In practice, competitive rock climbing is an example of a transgender-inclusive system that works. USA Climbing allows transgender athletes to compete in girl's categories. It's worth noting here that laws excluding transgender athletes promote harmful "gender policing" policies. For example, an anti-trans athlete law in Idaho created invasive testing policies which violated the privacy of cisgender women as well. On the other hand, in the trans-inclusive system of rock climbing, I have never felt unsafe. I have never felt that there is an unfair advantage given to trans athletes. I have never known anyone to take advantage of inclusivity policies to get a medal in a competition. Perhaps more strikingly, I have never even come across a trans athlete in a competition, to my knowledge, which leads me to my next point. Let me be very clear: this bill affects so few athletes that it is, more than anything else, a political statement. A statement that is hurtful and damaging to one of the most vulnerable groups in our nation. Thus, I urge an unfavorable report in committee on SB0588. Thank you.

# **SB 588- Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Vars**

Uploaded by: Nia Callender

Position: UNF



**Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director**  
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**BILL:** SB 588

**TITLE:** Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams - Designation Based on Sex (Fairness In Girls' Sports Act)

**DATE:** March 5, 2025

**POSITION:** Unfavorable

**COMMITTEE:** Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

**CONTACT:** Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

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The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four local school superintendents, **opposes** Senate Bill 588.

This bill requires an interscholastic or intramural athletic team or sport that is sponsored by a public or nonpublic high school to be expressly designated as one of the following based on biological sex: (1) a boys', male, or men's team or sport; (2) a girls', female, or women's team or sport; or (3) a coeducational or mixed team or sport. An interscholastic or intramural athletic team or sport designated for girls, females, or women may not include students of the male sex. A governmental entity, a licensing or accrediting organization, or an athletic association or organization may not accept a complaint, investigate, or take any other adverse action against a school for maintaining separate interscholastic or intramural athletic teams or sports for students of the female sex. Students and schools are authorized to bring specified civil actions.

Since 1991, interscholastic sports in Maryland have operated in accordance with the "Master Agreement Outlining the Interscholastic Structure for Public Schools in Maryland," which establishes the responsibilities of MPSSAA, MSDE, and local school systems. Local superintendents believe that this system of regulation and oversight is working well.

The MPSSAA Guidance for Participation of Transgender Youth in Interscholastic Athletics states that its purpose is to "designate a set of criteria in which student-athletes are able to compete on a level playing field in a safe, competitive and friendly environment, free of

discrimination. At the center of educational programming is the value placed in providing equal opportunity for all students.” The Guidance further provides that “each school system should develop and apply criteria for students to participate in interscholastic athletic teams consistent with their gender identity.”

This guidance includes several principles and criteria for local school systems to use in determining the eligibility of transgender students in interscholastic sports. These include attention to preserving the integrity of women's sports, as well as policies that are fair in light of the variation among individuals in strength, size, musculature, and ability. Through these means, the guidance reflects Maryland’s high priority on establishing and maintaining an interscholastic athletic system that assures that sports activities contribute to the entire educational program for all students choosing to participate.

Additionally, PSSAM would like to highlight the potential of this legislation to create liability for discriminatory practices under a new statewide system of criteria for student participation in women’s sports based solely on sex assigned at birth. Other state legislatures have established that enforcing the standard of biological sex would likely require subjecting youth to invasive mandates in order to ensure eligibility, which could be considered sex discrimination as defined by the Supreme Court case of *Bostock v. Clayton County*, in which the Court asserted that anti-transgender discrimination violated Title VII’s prohibition against sex discrimination.

Instead of the approach taken by this bill, PSSAM supports the maintenance of locally controlled systems of interscholastic athletics governed by the guidance of Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) and regulations adopted by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

For these reasons, PSSAM **opposes** Senate Bill 588 and kindly requests an **unfavorable** report.

# **SB588.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nicole Hollywood

Position: UNF



## LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

Bill: **SB588/HB0156 Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams - Designation Based on Sex (Fairness In Girls' Sports Act)**

Organization: PFLAG Salisbury Inc., PO Box 5107, Salisbury Maryland 21802

Submitted by: Dr. Nicole Hollywood, Board Member

Position: **OPPOSE**

### **SALISBURY PFLAG STRONGLY OPPOSES DISCRIMINATION IN SPORTS**

This testimony in OPPOSITION of **SB588** is being submitted on behalf of PFLAG Salisbury, an organization dedicated to supporting, educating, and advocating for LGBTQIA+ people and their families.

SB588 is a misguided bill rooted in transphobia that is simply not backed by the scientific research. If this bill passes it will be a form of state-censored intolerance and legislators who support this bill will be on the wrong side of history and forever mired in the bog of bigotry. Bills such as these are being used as a way to discriminate against transgender Americans opening the door to the humiliating treatment of any, and all, youth who don't fit culturally-accepted gender norms.

Simply put, SB588 is discriminatory, not rooted in science, runs contrary to the purpose of youth sports, and is publicly opposed by all our nation's most renowned medical, psychological, and child development professional organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Psychological Association. Further, this bill goes directly against the guidance of the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) whose policy states - "participation should provide for the opportunity for all students to participate in interscholastic athletics in a manner that is consistent with their gender identity, irrespective of the gender listed on a student's academic record."

According to COMAR 13A.01.04.03 "All students in Maryland's public schools without exception have a right to educational environments that are safe, appropriate for academic achievement, and free from ANY form of harassment."

In 2014, the State of Maryland prohibited discrimination based on gender identity and expression with regard to public accommodations, housing, and employment in the Fairness for All Marylanders Act of 2014.

SB588 encourages adults, children, and parents to ostracize, isolate, and discriminate against trans and gender non-conforming youth and provides protections for individuals who report and draw attention to suspected TGNC youth as well as opportunities for individuals who feel "harmed" by the presence of TGNC youth to seek civil action.

The attention and debate caused by bills such as SB588 is shown to have a deleterious impact on LGBTQIA+ youth. According to Free State Justice -"This onslaught of anti-trans legislation can bring on feelings of ennui or weltschmerz that reality will never reach an individual's expectations of the life they want and deserve." According to the ACLU, "there is no one way for women's bodies to be. Women, including women who are transgender, intersex, or disabled, have a range of different physical characteristics. A person's sex is made up of multiple biological characteristics and they may not all align as typically male or female in a given person. Further, many people who are not trans can have hormones levels outside of the range considered typical of a cis person of their assigned sex."

Gender is a spectrum and not all individuals identify or present as male or female. Transgender people are our beloved friends and family, co-workers, neighbors, students, community members, children, and parents. Being transgender is not the whole of anyone's identity because gender identity is just one small piece of who one is as an individual.

Transgender athletes participate in sports for the same reasons as everyone else—to get and stay healthy, be part of a team, and build a sense of belonging with their peers. Many who oppose the inclusion of trans athletes erroneously claim that allowing trans athletes to compete will harm cisgender women but excluding transgender and gender non-conforming students hurts all students.

Denying transgender youth access to athletic programs is discrimination. It is regressive and unjust and not in line with our moniker as the Free State. PFLAG Salisbury Inc. strongly opposes this legislation and recommends an UNFAVORABLE report in committee.

# **Richa Tripathi - SB0588 Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Richa Tripathi

Position: UNF

*You call this the “Fairness in Girls’ Sports Act.” But I ask of you, what about this is “fair?”*

My name is Richa Tripathi, and I’m a junior at John F. Kennedy High School. I’m a queer, female, student athlete, and I have a lot to say about why this bill should be rejected. Let’s break it down:

### **1) Gender Participation Experiences**

I played on a “co-ed” recreational soccer team for six years straight as the only female player on the team. I was excluded, bullied, ridiculed, and harassed for *six years*. I remember being in gym class in middle school and being excluded from groups playing different sports as a girl trying to play with boys. I told my gym teachers this, and they simply told me to “pick another sport.”

A friend told me that her girl’s volleyball team had to wear leftover men’s jerseys from eight years prior as they didn’t secure funding to get their own jerseys.

I had another friend who told me about being at the state-wide diving championships and seeing female divers getting HUNDREDS of points lower than their male counterparts because the judges were trained to recognize proper movements on the male body.

Sexism is an issue that is so much bigger than your assigned gender at birth. It is an issue of perception— women are perceived as less successful and weak, causing them to get lower scores and less funding, as well as less respect. If you want girls’ sports to be more fair, there are other ways to do it. But it is my belief that the people who don’t want transgender women in sports and pass bills like these to achieve that were never concerned with true fairness in girls’ sports— they were instead focused on barring transgender students from yet another public space with no clear direction for them to go instead.

### **2) Female Autonomy**

It’s not enough to not allow people to question women’s sports, it’s enough to not allow people to question *women* in women’s sports. In not allowing transgender girls to participate in women’s sports, we continue a long history of policing women’s bodies. If she is too fast or not fast enough, she is a target. If she is too tall or not tall enough, she is a target. If she is too athletic or not athletic enough, she is a target. We are promoting a culture that allows people to question even the assigned gender at birth of other people as “fair game” and reasoning as to why she is better or worse than someone else. In passing these measures, we would be setting a dangerous precedent that impacts how ALL women in sports are perceived and subjects her to more intense scrutiny, not just transgender women.

### **3) Athletes Supporting Transgender Athletes**

Here is a [list of some notable women’s sports advocates](#), including distinguished [professional players](#) and reputable organizations, who support transgender athlete participation:

- Kayla Ward
- Imani Dorsey
- Naima Reddick

- Erica Meacham
- Megan Rapinoe
- Billie Jean King
- Anne Lieberman
- The Women's Sports Foundation
- The National Women's Law Center

Additionally, here is the policy on Transgender Athlete Participation from the [United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee website](#): “When considering participation in sport, we rely on fairness as our guiding principle. It is not fair if athletes cannot participate or compete in sport because of their gender identity – participation in sport should be available to everyone.” If the Olympics thinks so, why don't we?

I am a student athlete myself, and I have competed against girls who have been much taller, stronger, and more muscular than me. Yet, I have never once accused them of having an unfair advantage for having what people would consider to be more “masculine” traits. Several people have submitted written testimony today to share their experiences as student athletes, where they all consider transgender athletic participation to be a non-issue, seeing as few of them participate in sports to begin with, so I don't feel the need to elaborate much about this point. Just know that girls who are actually in girls' sports in the modern day don't have a problem with transgender girls participating.

#### **4) Unfair Advantages Based On Identity**

Sports aren't fair, and we know this. That's why there are separate leagues based on gender, age, and physical abilities. But what, pray tell, is the greatest [indicator](#) of success in sports? Spoiler alert: It's not being transgender.

The greatest indicator of success in sports, especially at the high school level, is your socioeconomic status. I go to one of the poorest schools in our school district, which consistently ranks last in terms of academic performance in our county. With the rise in club sports, which are incredibly expensive and time-consuming year-round leagues that many athletes are recommended to, there is also a clear disparity between athletic performance in interschool competitions. My swim team is almost never able to beat other swim teams with more club sports participants, for example, as the financial makeup of our neighborhood is fundamentally different than that of the schools we compete against. In short, your scores in competitions are inextricably linked with the income level of your neighborhood, *especially* at the high school level. About [0.005%](#) of youth in Maryland identify as transgender, while [11.6%](#) of children are in poverty, with many more being considered low-income.

Yet, I never hear of a bill with the intention of leveling the playing field for low-income students. If there is really a push to make high school sports more fair, there are other ways to look at it without directly targeting yet another vulnerable minority group.

#### **3) Fairness in Girls' Sports**

Rather than barring transgender athletes, who make up an incredibly small percentage of high school sports teams, from participating, here are some other potential measures that would better ensure fairness in high school girls' sports:

- Properly sized and clean uniforms
- Equal funding distributions by athletic departments between male and female teams
- Menstrual products (pads, tampons, medication) available in bathrooms & locker rooms
- Subsidizing of funds not provided by athletic departments for girls' teams in low-income areas and areas that otherwise have a high need
- Proper training of judges, referees, and other impartial officials to ensure that they are trained to accurately score both male and female teams
- Initiatives that support the availability of coaches for female sports teams, as many male sports teams (and thus male athletes) receive more interest from potential coaches
- Overall, promoting a *culture of respect* for female athletes and coaches of girls' teams

Finally, as a gay person third, a woman second, and a human first, I ask you to consider this: **Do you only care about women's sports when a "man" enters them?**

# **Testimony opposing SB0588 - Education - Interschol**

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: UNF

SB0588\_RichardKaplowitz\_UNF  
03/05/2025

Richard Keith Kaplowitz  
Frederick, MD 21703

**TESTIMONY ON SB#/0588- POSITION: UNFAVORABLE**  
**Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams -  
Designation (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)**

**TO:** Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony opposing SB#/0588, **Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams - Designation Based on Sex (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)**

This bill is based on misinformation and fear about whether a trans female has an advantage in participation in sports. It is applicable to a very small subset of athletes in Maryland.

My Jewish faith acknowledges the book of Jewish wisdom, the Talmud, and how the ancient sages and rabbis viewed gender diversity. The study *Exploring Gender Diversity in the Talmud: An Analysis of the Eight Genders*<sup>1</sup> covers what ancient wisdom exists on gender identity.

The National Library of Medicine within the National Institute of Health has done a comprehensive study of the issue **Sport and Transgender People: A Systematic Review of the Literature Relating to Sport Participation and Competitive Sport Policies.**<sup>2</sup> A summary of their findings shows:

To the authors' knowledge, there has been no systematic review of the literature pertaining to sport participation or competitive sport policies in transgender people. Therefore, this review aimed to address this gap in literature. Eight research articles and 31 sport policies were reviewed.

#### Results

In relation to sport-related physical activity, this review found the lack of inclusive and comfortable environments to be the primary barrier to participation for transgender people. This review also found transgender people had a mostly negative experience in competitive sports because of the restrictions the sport's policy placed on them. The majority of transgender competitive sport policies that were reviewed were not evidence based.

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1

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/382297498\\_Exploring\\_Gender\\_Diversity\\_in\\_the\\_Talmud\\_An\\_Analysis\\_of\\_the\\_Eight\\_Genders](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/382297498_Exploring_Gender_Diversity_in_the_Talmud_An_Analysis_of_the_Eight_Genders)

<sup>2</sup> <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5357259/>

Conclusion: Currently, there is no direct or consistent research suggesting transgender female individuals (or male individuals) have an athletic advantage at any stage of their transition (e.g. cross-sex hormones, gender-confirming surgery) and, therefore, competitive sport policies that place restrictions on transgender people need to be considered and potentially revised.

In light of the acknowledgement of the Talmudic sages that there are more than two genders and the results of a SCIENTIFICALLY based analysis of a broad range of studies providing data for analysis of whether this is a problem this bill seeks to delineate, I conclude this bill is based on transphobia and not necessary.

Michigan State University Glossary of the Gender and Sexuality Center <sup>3</sup> shows how the bill misstates the term it is using.

**Biological Sex** - an outdated term for birth-assigned sex. See birth-assigned sex.

**Birth-Assigned Sex** - the designation that refers to a person's biological, morphological, hormonal, and genetic composition. One's sex is typically assigned at birth and classified as either male or female. "Assigned-at-birth" serves to imply that sex assignment is without the agency of the individual. Birth-assigned sex is often mistakenly confused with gender.

Nature.com makes clear that there are variations in the **Genetic Mechanisms of Sex Determination** <sup>4</sup>

In placental mammals, the presence of a Y chromosome determines sex. Normally, cells from females contain two X chromosomes, and cells from males contain an X and a Y chromosome. **Occasionally, individuals are born with sex chromosome aneuploidies, and the sex of these individuals is always determined by the absence or presence of a Y chromosome.**

In other words, a person can look like one sex but internally, genetically, be another. Unless this bill contemplates genetic testing for every student wishing to play sports only that genetic testing can determine their sex as sex and gender are NOT the same thing. Because of the lack of comprehension of this difference and use of outdated terms and unscientific conclusions this bill should be rejected.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return an unfavorable report on SB#/0588.**

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3

[https://www.google.com/search?q=definitions+of+biological+sex&rlz=1C1GCEB\\_enUS962US962&oq=definitions+of+biological+sex&gs\\_lcrp=EgZiaHJvbWUyBggAEEUYOTIICAQABgWGB4yCggCEAAyChgWGB4yCAgDEAAyFhgeMggIBBAAGBYHjIICAUQABgWGB4yCAgGEAAyFhgeMggIBxAAGBYHjIICAQABgWGB4yDQgJEAAyhgMYgAQYigXSAQg2MzE3ajBqNKgCALACAQ&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8](https://www.google.com/search?q=definitions+of+biological+sex&rlz=1C1GCEB_enUS962US962&oq=definitions+of+biological+sex&gs_lcrp=EgZiaHJvbWUyBggAEEUYOTIICAQABgWGB4yCggCEAAyChgWGB4yCAgDEAAyFhgeMggIBBAAGBYHjIICAUQABgWGB4yCAgGEAAyFhgeMggIBxAAGBYHjIICAQABgWGB4yDQgJEAAyhgMYgAQYigXSAQg2MzE3ajBqNKgCALACAQ&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nature.com/scitable/topicpage/genetic-mechanisms-of-sex-determination-314/#:~:text=Normally%2C%20cells%20from%20females%20contain,presence%20of%20a%20Y%20chromosome.>

# **2025-03-05-SB588-Fairness in Girls' Sports Act (UN**

Uploaded by: Spencer Dove

Position: UNF



# State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights

*Respect...Integrity...Effective Communication*

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March 5, 2025

## **Senate Bill 588 - Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams - Designation Based on Sex (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)** **Position: Oppose**

Dear Chairperson Feldman, Vice Chairperson Kagan, and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (“MCCR”; “The Commission”) is the State agency responsible for the enforcement of laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, commercial leasing, health services, and state contracts based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, physical and mental disability, source of income, and military status.

SB588 will authorize discrimination based on gender identity and perpetuate transphobia. It will stigmatize vulnerable children, prevent them from being who they are, and serve to exclude these children from important school activities. This contradicts MCCR’s purpose to eliminate discrimination based on protected classes.

The “Fairness in Girls’ Sports Act” is not a novel idea. Bills with largely the same language have been introduced and even passed in several other states, beginning with Idaho, which enacted its bill in 2020. Other states followed suit by adopting their own bills over the next two years, such as West Virginia (HB3293), Oklahoma (SB2), Alabama (HB391), and South Carolina (HB4608), among several others. Some states, including Missouri (SB781) and Ohio (HB61), proposed similar bills in 2022 that did not pass. Maryland should not join in this trend of recent anti-trans legislation, and instead uphold trans people’s rights, dignity, and identity. When similar bills were introduced in the Maryland General Assembly in 2022 (HB757), 2023 (HB359), and 2024 (HB47 and SB381), it received unfavorable reports from the committees. MCCR urges the same result in 2025.

After its demise in 2022, the Maryland bill was amended to focus only on high schools, but almost every student attending a high school is under the age of 18—a child. At this age, like any age, physiological traits do not necessarily determine athletic skill. Any advantage that a trans girl could have could likewise be found in a cisgender girl, as there is vast natural variation among all people. While the NCAA and the Olympic Committees have recently updated their policies on trans athletes, even they have not gone as far as SB588 does. This legislation contravenes science and enshrines outdated and damaging social beliefs that do

*“Our vision is to have a State that is free from any trace of unlawful discrimination.”*

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not belong in schools in 2025. Instead, schools should be promoting tolerance, inclusion, and sportsmanship. If Maryland truly wants to be fair to its girls, it must be fair to all girls.

Permitting legal assessments of biological sex to become a matter of law will almost certainly target Marylanders from “disadvantaged and mostly poor backgrounds.” Any analysis of transgender inclusion in sports should be a matter of research and analysis performed by academic and medical experts relying upon credible peer-reviewed research to draw conclusions. An article penned by faculty of the Center for Sport Management Research and Education, Department of Health and Kinesiology, Texas A&M University and published by the Kinesiology review concludes that “sport is a human right, and as such, a right for transgender individuals” further providing “five reasons for inclusion, basing their arguments on sport as a human right, fairness, gendered notions of athleticism, well-being, and economics. (See **Transgender Inclusion in Sport** **George B. Cunningham, 1 Risa Isard, 2 and E. Nicole Melton**<sup>2 1</sup> **Center for Sports Management, Research, and Education, Department of Health and Kinesiology, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, USA; 2Mark H. McCormack Department of Sports Management, University of Massachusetts Amherst, MA, USA.**)

Maryland should continue to be the State of inclusion and not pass legislation that seeks to exclude its citizens and legislate intolerance. For these reasons, the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights urges an unfavorable vote on SB588. Thank you for your time and consideration of the information contained in this letter. MCCR looks forward to the continued opportunity to work with you to promote and improve civil rights and human rights in Maryland.

**2025\_03\_05 SB 588 - Oppose.pdf**

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**OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

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*Attorney General*

March 5, 2025

**TO:** The Honorable Brian Feldman  
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

**FROM:** Tiffany Clark  
Director, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

**RE:** Senate Bill 588 – Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams - Designation Based on Sex (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)- **Oppose**

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The Office of the Attorney General urges the Ways and Means Committee to give **Senate Bill 588** - Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams - Designation Based on Sex (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act) an unfavorable report. **Senate Bill 588** requires public and nonpublic school's interscholastic or intramural sports teams to be expressly designated based on biological sex.

Currently, the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association has had a transgender student policy for participation in interscholastic athletics since 2012. It has worked effectively to ensure fair competition and allow students to participate on the athletic team of the gender they identify with. A categorical ban on transgender students from participating in athletics consistent with their gender identity across all sports, age groups, and levels of competition fail to account for differences among students across grade and education levels. They also fail to account for different levels of competition, including no-cut teams that let all students participate—and different types of sports.

There is no evidence that including the small number of transgender students, particularly transgender girls, has altered competitive fairness in competition or caused cisgender girls to be excluded from spots on teams. But evidence is abundant that the ban harms the mental health of vulnerable students who connect to their schools and community through athletic competition. Categorically preventing participation of students on sports teams of the gender they identify adversely impacts a key component of public education to include students without regard to their identity and will have lasting impacts on the students.

In addition to opposing the bill because of its impact on transgender students, it may be contrary to Title IX and Equal Protection, thus barred by the Supremacy Clause. The Department of Education has issued a notice of interpretation followed by a notice of rulemaking that would prohibit discrimination against trans students precisely as described in **Senate Bill 588**.

In addition, the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice has joined the Department of Education and has filed a brief in a case in West Virginia asserting that Title IX and the Equal Protection Clause requires schools to permit students to participate in sports consistent with their gender identity. The Ninth Circuit upheld a preliminary injunction barring enforcement of a similar Idaho law on Equal Protection grounds. *Hecox v. Little*, 79 F.4th 1009 (9th Cir. 2023).

For the above reasons, the Office of the Attorney General urges this committee to give **Senate Bill 588** an unfavorable report

cc: The Honorable Mary Beth Carozza  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee Members