

5 March 2025

RE: Homeschool Students in Maryland – Right to Play

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Macrina Zdobysz, and I am a homeschooler in Maryland at the high school level. I was recently informed that there is a bill being presented to the Maryland state legislature that would require Maryland public high schools to allow homeschoolers within their residing district to participate in public school sports. As a homeschooler, I fully support this action for the following reasons:

First, this would allow homeschoolers to create and maintain good overall lifestyles. Participation in sports programs can contribute to the mental and physical growth of students. Mental growth includes sports analogies that can relate to school. For example, when your team is down by a few points, you will want to strive and play your best to help your team win. This relates to school because students will then want to strive to be their best on a personal level, thereby working hard to increase their grades to achieve a “win”. Physical growth can lead to a healthier and more active individual. For example, allowing participation in Maryland public school sports at a high school level would allow homeschoolers to strive to take better care of their overall health. I truly believe that a healthy and active society leads to a more productive society.

Second, passing a bill to allow homeschoolers to participate in public school sports would widen the horizon of opportunities available to these students. Many college scouts attend high school games to see how specific students/players perform. Depending on the performance of that student/player, that college might consider offering them a scholarship. Because homeschoolers are currently not permitted to play in public school sports programs, the chances for this opportunity are decreased. Even with federal funding, many students may not be able to attend college due to being unable to pay for tuition. Allowing homeschoolers to play in public school sports would allow them to showcase their skills for the potential of being chosen for college scholarships. This would likely create more opportunities for high schoolers to financially be able to attend college. Thomas Jefferson once said, “An educated citizenry is a vital requisite for our survival as free people,” and I believe that this quote speaks to the extreme importance of a well-educated society.

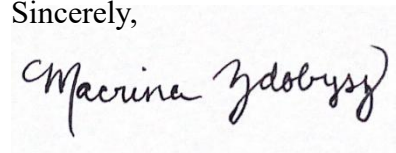
Third, homeschoolers would be able to create lasting relationships with teammates and coaches. I would imagine that many adults that played in high school sports programs vividly remember their coach, and the impact that their coach has had on his or her life. A good coach helps his or her team through the losses, and celebrates with them in the wins. A good coach will strive to create healthy relationships with each team member. A good coach is dependable. I believe that a good coach is something that cannot be replaced, regardless of how hard you try.

Additionally, when you play a team sport, that team becomes your family. You learn to rely on each other through both good and bad. You have your teammate's backs, and you know that they have yours. Through this, unbreakable bonds are formed between players. While homeschoolers can make friends through other channels such as co-op, meet-ups, and online chats, I believe that nothing compares to the friendships that are made through sports. While recreational sports are still an opportunity to build these relationships, not all counties have recreational sports for all grade levels. Additionally, not all counties have recreational sports that students would want to participate in—but their local public school might. And I highly doubt that the feeling of knowing the opportunity is right in front of you, but that you cannot go for it due to state laws feels good at all. Abraham Lincoln once said that “The better part of one's life consists of his friendships.” I fully agree with Abraham Lincoln, as I have been blessed with friendships that have had such importance and an impact on my life.

I am choosing to support this idea because I know the outcome and effect that it would have on other homeschoolers here in present-day Maryland, and all the future homeschoolers of Maryland. Passing this bill would allow dreams to come true. Dreams that have been dreamt for so many years now. Why would you want to bar homeschoolers from public high school sports? What good would come of it? Allow me to answer this question, from my point of view: there is nothing good that could come of restricting homeschoolers from public high school sports. However, I believe that so much good could come of allowing them to participate, as I stated in each of my three supporting arguments. Homeschoolers would be able to grow both mentally and physically, have more opportunities available, and create lasting relationships.

I appreciate you taking the time to read/listen to my testimony. I sincerely hope that you attempt to resonate with my perspective, and with that of other homeschoolers'.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Macrina Zdobysz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Macrina Zdobysz