

Greetings honorable members of the Maryland Assembly,

I am writing as a resident of Maryland and as an active member of Maryland's athletic community. I have played sports at all levels from adolescence through college and into adulthood. I write to you to vehemently oppose the "Fairness in Girls' Sports Act."

Beyond the fact that it is sickening to imagine how this act would be enforced, I write to share my experiences playing on sports teams with trans women, an experience I doubt any of you have ever had. You write these bills to legislate people you don't know, don't treat as human, and about situations you have never been in.

Playing sports, especially during adolescence is an essential way that community develops. This includes community of all genders, this includes people of all experiences. Let sports be about sports. Let them be unifiers. Not places for further divisions in our society. Not places where adults are so concerned about children's genitalia that they are interrupting one of the few places, off the screen, where kids can gather. We constantly hear that isolation and loneliness are epidemics for children and teens, why make sports an environment that is hostile when it can be so key to forming relationships, building bonds, and playing with people different than yourself.

I have played on women's sports teams at a college and adult level playing high contact sports, such as rugby and football. My teams have included cis women and trans women, and I have never felt that there is an unfair advantage that exists beyond the uniqueness of any individual athlete. We all have different bodies, different abilities that are innate or are honed through years of work. How you perform as an athlete has nothing to do with your gender, and much more to do with your sense of discipline and commitment to a team. You guise this bill under fairness and yet, all it does is drive a machine that discriminates against trans people.

As a Marylander, as an American, and as an athlete, I stand against this act and urge you to vote against this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Teresa Norman