

## **The Right to Play**

**My name is Isaiah Rider. I am a junior this year, and I have been homeschooled my whole life. One of the most enjoyable things I have in my life is sports. I have been playing since I was about seven. Some of my best memories and friends have come from playing sports. Just this past year, I hit my first out of the park home run, and crazy as it may seem, it was a walk-off grand slam. But now that my teammates have gone on to play high school ball, I will not have the opportunity to make these memories on the diamond again, all because Maryland is behind other states in its inclusion of homeschoolers. I remember my last year of playing rec football. After our last game, I cried thinking I would never get the chance to play my favorite sport again. Thankfully, in Carroll County, I found a homeschool high school football team on which I have played for the past two years. I have really loved my time there, and I am excited to finish my high school career there this fall. But how much easier would it be for me to ride my bike four minutes to go to my local high school for practice instead of driving forty-five minutes to and from practice. And some sports are not even offered in the homeschool community. I think of swimming, golf, wrestling, and etc. Also, I do not have access to a school gym where I can work out with my teammates. Since November of last year, I have been consistently working out by myself. But competition makes one better. When you see your teammate bench more than you, you just want to one up him. These are just some of the reasons why I approve of HB 1185. This act may not apply to me, but I have seven younger siblings, who could be affected by this act. Thank you for your time and the opportunity for me to share my testimony with you guys.**