

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB156**  
***FAIRNESS IN GIRLS SPORTS ACT***  
JANUARY 29, 2025  
HOUSE WAYS and MEANS COMMITTEE

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Dear Members of the Committee,

I am dismayed, and you should be too, that oral testimony is not allowed by the public on this bill. I worked in the House for 20 years, and the message from delegates to their constituents was always “Come to Annapolis. Come testify. We want to hear the voices of those we serve.” This is not a pandemic. This is not a lock-down. Why not let those who want to speak, on either side of this issue, do so? Shameful!

You probably know something about the issue of whether boys should play on girls competitive teams, and if girls could play on boys competitive teams, and may have already made up your mind. But as I am always eager to learn about an issue, I trust you are too. It was quite enlightening when I visited Delegate offices this session and spoke to delegates and staff how many were supportive. 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/respirate 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”

Which is why single sex team sports, or rules re weight (such as in wrestling) be used.

I believe 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! Even doctors are astounded by what the human body is and can do. 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, 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 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

Competitive rower where classifications are by sex, and then age and weight within