

Committee: House Ways and Means Committee

Bill: HB156 - Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams -

Designation Based on Sex (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act)

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Dear Delegate Atterbeary and fellow members of the 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 girl friends 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 afterthought. Women and girls should 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 support here in Maryland — bipartisan.

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](#), 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.

HB156 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 Delegate Atterbeary and fellow members of 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 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

Independent Women's Forum