

Monday, February 16, 2026

Dear Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

I am a resident of Baltimore City and District 41. I am also a clinical psychologist working with trans youth and a practitioner of evidence-based therapeutic practices supporting members of the LGBTQ+ community. I am testifying in **strong opposition to SB50 - Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams and Sports - Designation.**

SB50 attempts to segregate trans women, girls, and transfeminine people out of public life, beginning with school sports. **This bill sets an extremely dangerous legal precedent for relegating trans women, including trans children, to second class citizenship.** As a Marylander and as a mental health practitioner, I strongly oppose any legal curtailments of the rights of trans people in our state.

Unfortunately, for many Americans, the concocted “debate” about trans athletes’ participation in sports unleashed a tidal wave of transphobia barely concealed as trumped-up concerns for fairness and safety in sports. Despite comprising a tiny minority of athletes, the massive degree of hostility and fixation directed at trans athletes is clearly about more than just athletics: it’s about finding a seemingly acceptable outlet for transphobic hatred. **SB50 would enshrine that transphobia in Maryland law.**

While politically motivated anti-trans activists often exaggerate the differences in abilities between cis and trans athletes, **there simply is no evidence that trans women or girls, or other transfeminine people, have any blanket advantages in sports**<sup>1</sup>. Any risks proponents of SB50 claim to be protecting people from are clearly exaggerated with the aim of oppressing vulnerable communities and harming their quality of life.

Furthermore, SB50 would bar vulnerable children from participation in activities that many children find deeply meaningful and which foster positive growth, including building friendships, discipline, and teamwork. **SB50 would mean depriving trans children of these life-changing opportunities solely on the basis of their gender identity.**

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<sup>1</sup> Trans Women in Sport: What Does the Science Say? Dr Sav Zwickl, Eli Ward-Smith, Arden Wong, and Prof Ada Cheung (2025).

The tragedy is that, if passed, SB50 will have a much farther-reaching and more devastating impact than in sports alone: it further puts segregationist, pseudo-scientific language into Maryland law, setting up a legal framework to erase the public existence of trans people.

Finally, **I strongly oppose SB50 on the basis of what this bill would communicate to trans Marylanders: that Maryland is not a state where trans people are welcome, supported, and treated as citizens with equal rights to every other Marylander.** It is categorically unethical, harmful, and bigoted to limit and erode participation in public life for a small and vulnerable minority of people simply on the basis of their gender identity. I am proud of our state's standing as a comparable safe haven for trans people compared to many other states in the US, and in the strongest possible terms I believe it is imperative that we continue to protect trans people's rights in the state of Maryland.

Again, in the strongest possible terms, I wholeheartedly **oppose SB50 - Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams and Sports - Designation.**

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Katherine Blaha  
Baltimore, MD 21209