

SB50 Education - Interscholastic and Intramural Junior Varsity and Varsity Teams and Sports - Designation (Fairness in Girls' Sports Act) - Maryland Legislative Session 2026.

**POSITION: UNFAVORABLE**

To Chair Senator Brian J. Feldman, Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

I was a child who grew up participating in competitive sports as a swimmer. I began swimming in the Montgomery County Swim League on the Little Falls swim team in Bethesda, approximately from 1998 to 2001. I then went on to swim from junior high to when I graduated high school in 2009. I was also active in choir and orchestra during my high school years between 2004 and 2009.

I was not the fastest swimmer. There were a few times I placed first in swim meets, but that was rare. I was not worried about the gender identity or sexual orientation of my fellow team mates or opponents in the adjacent lanes. My swim coaches (at the two schools I attended) always emphasized our best athletic performance more than the outcome of our athletic performance. There were a few times on all 3 (three) swim teams (i.e. Little Falls neighborhood swim team, The Lab School of Washington, and The Perkiomen School) that I had to swim in a heat with swimmers of another gender because I had missed when I was supposed to swim at the meet. My time was still counted but with the proper category.

The acts of this proposed bill will open room for discrimination and bullying to people who are not transgender and who may not appear in a manner that is considered traditionally feminine or masculine. For example, in February 2024, a [cisgender](#) high school athlete in Utah was falsely identified as being transgender simply because she is a tomboy.

(<https://www.nbcnews.com/nbc-out/out-news/utah-official-faces-calls-resign-falsely-suggesting-teen-girl-transgen-r-cna137903>; <https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/08/us/natalie-cline-controversy-student-gender-social-media-posts> ; <https://abcnews.go.com/US/utah-school-board-official-falsely-suggested-teen-girl/story?id=107100300> ;

See also

<https://www.abc4.com/news/girl-investigated-for-being-transgender-after-winning-state-title/>)

Some may argue about this alleged unfair advantage (of a physical or physiological nature) with different genders. However, the same could be said in the case of disability. In 2006-2007, Maryland school athlete Tatyanna McFadden, a wheelchair user, fought to compete in her school's track team alongside her non-disabled team mates and won her lawsuit.

(<https://www.nbcsports.com/olympics/news/tatyana-mcfadden-paralympics-2024>

<https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/ESPNSports/story?id=1877127>

<https://www.keranews.org/2012-08-31/paralympians-pursuit-enables-aspiring-athletes>)

I believe if this bill was passed and enacted, it could pave the way to discrimination in other scholastic activities, such as music. I grew up playing the piano and later the accordion and I used to compete nationally in competitions with the American Accordionists' Association and the American Accordion Musicological Society from 2000 and 2004, and scholarship awards in 2002 and 2003 at the Las Vegas International Accordion Convention; I entered college as a music major for accordion and voice. I sang in my church's youth choir; we sang sacred choral works. In the high school choir, we sang various musical theater tunes. Different musical instruments can often be physically demanding along with the demands of a certain musical composition. Many school bands and orchestras and other music ensembles that I am aware of are not segregated by gender/sex. When I was competing in accordion competitions, I lost to both girls and boys in various competition categories, and sometimes we even competed with the same music composition. What determined our performance to the judges were our musicianship and skills and individual interpretations of the musical composition.

Beginning in late 2015, I came out to my family and friends as a transgender woman and I began taking life-saving gender affirming hormone therapy that includes Estradiol and Spironolactone, along with changing my full name and gender marker. As a transgender person I do not agree with discrimination in school athletics on the basis of consistent gender identity/expression. Going on Estradiol changed the fat and muscle distribution and my upper body strength.

The last time I went swimming was in April 2018 and I changed in the toilet stalls and stored my belongings in a locker in the women's locker room. Also, I have been at my church retreats at Camp Wabanna in Maryland (between 2017 and 2019) and I used the women's showers (that have individual locking stalls) all right with no issue and I was openly transgender amongst my fellow church members.

I ask that you do not pass this bill. I ask for a *very* unfavorable outcome.

Ms. Lizzy Graham (pronouns she/her)  
Maryland Legislative District 20.