

Written Testimony in Support of HB63

Maryland General Assembly

Sponsor: Delegate Kathy Szeliga

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of **HB63**. I testified in person before this body two years ago, and I am here again because the need to protect girls and women in sport has only become more urgent—not less.

I am a wife, a mother, and a registered Democrat. My family has lived in Maryland for over forty years, and both of my children were born in Baltimore County. My daughter is now thirteen years old—and she deserves what every girl deserves: the chance to succeed or fail **within the context of female ability**, on a level playing field, with safety, dignity, and fairness intact.

Sport is one of the most powerful teachers we give our children. It teaches resilience, accountability, teamwork, and self-knowledge. But those lessons only hold when competition is fair. When girls are told that their boundaries, safety, and opportunities must give way to a boy's internal sense of identity, sport stops being empowering and becomes coercive.

There is **never a justification for prioritizing a boy's feelings over a girl's right to fair and protected competition.**

I am a former four-year NCAA scholarship cross-country athlete and a current competitive cyclist with national and world-level medals. Over the past six years alone, I have been required to compete against **eight different male athletes** in women's cycling events—at the regional, national, and even world level. I have seen women's titles, podium places, and opportunities erased in real time. This is not theoretical. It is not hypothetical. It is happening to women and girls now.

In 2018, I competed at Track Cycling Worlds in Los Angeles—the same event where a trans-identified male was awarded a women's world title and world record. That moment marked a turning point for many of us. Since then, countless female athletes have quietly stepped away from sport, not because they lacked talent or dedication, but because the rules no longer protected them.

Women must be free to speak honestly about these experiences. Calling a man a man is not harassment. Stating biological facts is not misconduct. Defending sex-based sport categories is not bigotry. Yet women who speak up are routinely silenced, investigated, or punished. For nearly a year, I was forced to defend myself to SafeSport investigators after male competitors accused me of “sexual misconduct and harassment” for wearing a **Save Women's Sports** shirt in competition. Systems designed to protect female athletes are now being used to intimidate them into silence.

That is not justice. That is not inclusion. And it is not what Maryland families want for their daughters.

The global sports community is beginning to acknowledge what women have been saying all along. The **International Olympic Committee has moved away from blanket inclusion mandates**, placing responsibility back on individual sport governing bodies to ensure fairness and safety. In response, leading international federations—including world governing bodies for athletics, swimming, cycling, rugby, and boxing—have conducted extensive scientific and ethical reviews and **revised their policies to protect the female category**. These organizations recognize a simple truth: **male physical advantage is real, measurable, and not eliminated by testosterone suppression**.

“The strongest reasons for protecting a level playing field in women’s sports are ethical reasons,” said sports attorney William Bock, JD, who served as General Counsel of the US Anti-Doping Agency. “A boy is not a girl, a man is not a woman, and males competing in the female category of sport undermines the primary ethical rationale for competitive sport because it’s objectively not fair.” - [International Sports Summit](#)

Even more recently, executive-level direction in the United States has reaffirmed the legitimacy of **sex-based distinctions in sport**, emphasizing that girls’ and women’s athletic opportunities must be protected. Maryland should not lag behind while the rest of the world corrects course.

Categories in sport exist for a reason. We separate athletes by **sex, age, and weight class** to ensure fairness and safety. No one is permitted to “identify” into a younger age group or a lighter weight class. Sex categories are no different. The male category already exists as an open category. The only way women’s sport survives is through a **protected female category that excludes male advantage**.

I have two athletic children. Like families across Maryland, we are already being forced to contemplate impossible choices—whether continued participation in sport will compromise my daughter’s safety, self-esteem, and mental well-being. These dilemmas are not imposed on boys. That disparity alone should give this legislature pause.

Adolescent girls are already under extraordinary pressure. National data show alarming rates of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation among teenage girls. To tell them they must surrender fairness, privacy, and opportunity in the one arena meant to build confidence and resilience is both irresponsible and unjust.

Let me be clear: **there is no room for hate or intolerance in sport**. Trans-identified athletes who are biologically female already compete successfully in the female category, because biology—not identity—determines athletic performance. Trans-identified athletes who are biologically male should be welcomed into the male/open category with the same respect. This is not exclusion; it is fairness.

Bodies play sports. Identities do not.

HB63 offers Maryland the chance to lead with clarity, compassion, and courage—to protect girls of **all ages and all levels** in every sport. It affirms that women and girls matter, that their

boundaries matter, and that fairness is not negotiable. Sports leaders have an obligation to ensure fair competition, safety, and privacy for women and girls. Policies that permit males to compete in the female category can no longer be tolerated. From the [college athletes](#) who have filed suit against the NCAA to the [high school girls](#) fighting back in Connecticut, [women](#) have found their voice. It's time that those in leadership positions find that same courage and put an end to allowing men to compete in women's sports.

My daughter recently stood beside me in Washington, D.C., in support of women assembled outside the Supreme Court—women representing thousands of females whose athletic accomplishments have been compromised or erased. I want her to grow up knowing that her state stood up for her when it mattered.

I respectfully urge this committee to advance HB63 and ensure that Maryland athletics remain fair, safe, and meaningful for every girl.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Evie Edwards

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