

*HB 0063:*

*Requiring certain interscholastic and intramural junior varsity and varsity athletic teams or sports sponsored by certain schools and certain locker rooms to be expressly designated based on biological sex; prohibiting certain entities from taking certain adverse actions against a school for maintaining separate interscholastic and intramural junior varsity and varsity athletic teams or sports or locker rooms for students of the female sex; etc.*

Good morning. My name is Kristine Vander Wall of Crofton, MD. I am a former Division 3 and semi-professional soccer player, coach, and former PE teacher. I am also a mother of three high-school and college-aged students, all of whom played middle school and high school sports. I am in firm support of proposed House Bill 0063, which gives schools the right to designate sports teams and locker rooms to be distinctly male or female. This bill prohibits adverse action towards these schools and the people who comprise them.

As an 18-year-old collegiate soccer player, I shared close spaces with my female teammates in locker rooms and restrooms. I can't imagine having shared close quarters with a man who claimed to be a woman. Women, especially, can feel violated and unprotected by men in their personal spaces.

Regardless of one's perceived gender, it is a school's constitutional right to designate sports teams as distinctly "male" or "female", especially on religious grounds. According to Deuteronomy 22:5, "A woman shall not wear a man's garment, nor shall a man put on a woman's cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God" (ESV). Christians believe that men and women are created in God's image as male OR female. Naturally, at Christian schools, the administrations take that mandate seriously and designate teams and restrooms as male OR female.

Muslims do not generally support transgenderism, either, and they believe it changes Allah's creation. This is explicitly mentioned in the Quran (4:119). Men who imitate women and vice versa are typically condemned in Islam. Hence, Muslim schools throughout Maryland designate sports teams and bathrooms as "male" and "female" as well.

HB 0063 is an important bill. It protects Christian, Muslim, and other Maryland schools from deviating from their religious or protective convictions in keeping sports teams and bathrooms gender-separate. Schools deserve agency to assign students to same-gendered bathrooms and locker rooms as a matter of religious conviction and personal safety. These decisions are inherent, basic religious freedoms-freedoms that

are infringed upon when schools are punished for carrying out their religious beliefs. This bill is instrumental in 1) helping schools stay true to their convictions, and 2) protecting schools, administrators and students from the potential backlash delivered from those opposing their convictions.