



**Maryland Commission
on LGBTQIA+ Affairs**

Bill Title: Workgroup on Supporting Transgender and Gender Diverse Students – Established

Bill Number(s): HB1011

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Date: March 2, 2026

Submitted by: Jeremy Browning, Director of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

To:

House Ways and Means Committee

The Hon. Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Chair
The Hon. Jessica Feldmark, Vice Chair

Testimony on behalf of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs:

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs (Commission) respectfully submits this testimony in **strong support of HB1011** and the important step it takes to better understand and support transgender and gender diverse students in Maryland's public schools.

The Commission was established by the Maryland General Assembly to assess challenges facing LGBTQIA+ Marylanders, elevate community voices, and inform policies that advance equity, safety, and well-being. The creation of a dedicated workgroup reflects the need for coordinated, data-informed strategies to support transgender and gender diverse students across the State.

[Preliminary findings from the Commission's 2026 Maryland LGBTQIA+ Community Needs Assessment](#) demonstrate persistent gaps between policy intent and lived experience. Only 20% of respondents reported feeling extremely connected to an LGBTQIA+ community in Maryland, and more than 37% reported that LGBTQIA+ resources were only slightly available or not available to them. Transgender and nonbinary respondents reported disproportionate barriers across multiple systems, including health care, safety, and access to services.

The Commission's [2026 Recommendations to Support LGBTQIA+ Students](#) further underscore the urgency of this work. Transgender, nonbinary, and gender-expansive students face significantly elevated risks in school environments. Data from the [2023 CDC Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#) show that transgender students are more than twice as likely to report being bullied at school, nearly half reported seriously considering suicide in the past year, and nearly one in three reported a suicide attempt.

School climate data from the [2021 GLSEN Maryland State Snapshot](#) also reflect ongoing challenges. Seventy-six percent of LGBTQ+ students reported regularly hearing negative remarks about transgender people at school, and approximately half reported verbal harassment related to sexual orientation or gender identity. In addition, only 15.3% of LGBTQ+ students reported that their school had policies or official guidelines to support transgender and nonbinary students.

Together, these findings demonstrate both the urgency of the Workgroup's charge and the importance of ensuring that its recommendations are informed by the lived experiences of transgender and gender diverse individuals.

For these reasons, the Commission strongly supports HB1011.

Recommended Amendments: Ensure Transgender and Gender Diverse Representation

While the Commission strongly supports the bill, we respectfully recommend targeted amendments to ensure that the Workgroup includes meaningful representation from transgender and gender diverse individuals. As currently drafted, the bill does not require that any member of the Workgroup identify as transgender or gender diverse, which could result in a body charged with studying these issues without direct lived experience.

Amendment Option 1: Minimum Representation Requirement

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INSERT NEW SUBSECTION:

AT LEAST THREE MEMBERS OF THE WORKGROUP SHALL BE INDIVIDUALS WHO IDENTIFY AS TRANSGENDER OR GENDER DIVERSE.

This approach ensures that lived experience is meaningfully represented while maintaining flexibility in appointments.

Amendment Option 2: Commission Appointment Authority

Page 2 – Membership Section

INSERT NEW ITEM:

TWO MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE MARYLAND COMMISSION ON LGBTQIA+ AFFAIRS, AT LEAST ONE OF WHOM SHALL IDENTIFY AS TRANSGENDER OR GENDER DIVERSE.

This approach leverages the Commission’s statewide network and statutory role in elevating community voices.

Amendment Option 3: Student Voice Requirement

Because the workgroup focuses on students, the Committee may also consider strengthening the student provision:

Page 2, Line 9 (Student member)

AMEND TO READ:

ONE MEMBER WHO IS A STUDENT IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN THE STATE OR A RECENT GRADUATE AND WHO IDENTIFIES AS TRANSGENDER OR GENDER DIVERSE, APPOINTED BY THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT.

Amendment Option 4: Community-Based Organization Representation

INSERT:

ONE MEMBER REPRESENTING A COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION THAT PROVIDES SERVICES OR ADVOCACY FOR TRANSGENDER OR GENDER DIVERSE YOUTH.

This helps ensure policy recommendations are grounded in frontline experience.

Conclusion

HB1011 represents an important opportunity to strengthen Maryland’s support for transgender and gender diverse students. With targeted amendments to ensure meaningful representation from those most directly affected, the Workgroup will be better positioned to develop informed, practical, and effective recommendations.

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs strongly urges a favorable report with amendments on HB1011.

References:

Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs. (2026). *Maryland LGBTQIA+ Community Needs Assessment: Preliminary Findings Report* (in partnership with the University of Maryland Eastern Shore).

Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs. (2026). *Recommendations to Support LGBTQIA+ Students* (Adopted February 9, 2026).

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024). *2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results*. National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

GLSEN. (2023). *School climate for LGBTQ+ students in Maryland (2021 State Snapshot: Maryland)*. New York, NY: GLSEN.