

Dear Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for **HB1043**. My family is a homeschool family from Howard County. We have a son who graduated from high school and now attends the University of Maryland, and a seventh-grade daughter who is actively engaged in homeschool studies. I believe this bill represents an important step toward strengthening connections between homeschool families and the broader communities in which our children live, learn, and grow.

Talented student-athletes should not be excluded from high school athletics solely because their families have chosen a different instructional path. Homeschool students live in the same neighborhoods and participate in the same community activities. Public school athletic programs exist to promote youth development, leadership, teamwork, and community engagement. HB1043 removes an unnecessary barrier to participation while preserving fairness by ensuring that enrolled students retain placement priority and that homeschool participants meet the same eligibility, conduct, and safety standards.

I believe that HB1043 strikes a thoughtful balance between inclusion, fairness, and accountability. The bill expands opportunities for students without imposing new burdens on schools by preserving existing eligibility rules, safety requirements, and participation priorities. By allowing homeschool students to participate in high school athletics, this legislation strengthens unity among families, schools, and neighborhoods while supporting students' physical, social, and personal development. Ultimately, HB1043 advances student success while reinforcing the shared values that connect communities through education, teamwork, and shared opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued service to Maryland's students and families.

Very Respectfully,

Mauricio Blondet
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