

My name is David Lawrence, and my wife and I have been homeschooling our six children since we moved to Maryland from New Mexico in 2008. Currently, four of our six children (ages 19 to 26) have graduated from their homeschooling program, and are now productive members of society in their various jobs and vocations. We have appreciated the ability to homeschool in Maryland with relatively low regulations, and this environment has enabled our children to thrive with their education.

Having said that, one major impediment to our children's ability to have a well-rounded education is the limited opportunities available for a high-quality athletics experience. Compared to our prior state of New Mexico, which had no limitations for homeschool participation in high school sports, it has been a challenge living in Carroll County. Specifically, two of our now-graduated sons were high-quality soccer players, and would have greatly benefited to be able to play as part of our local high school. At the time when they were in high school and interested in playing on a high-quality team (without having to spend the large amounts of time and money for travel teams), I made various inquiries with the local high school about the possibility of them playing. Each time I was told that such participation was not possible.

Thus, when I heard about bill HB1043, which would finally allow homeschoolers to play on local school teams, I wanted to enthusiastically support it. We still have one son, who is 13 years old, that could benefit if such a bill were passed.

In addition to opening up opportunities for homeschool students, I consider that this bill brings more fairness to Maryland citizens such as ourselves who have been paying property taxes here in Maryland for nearly 20 years, but have not been allowed to participate in our local school sports program just because we have chosen to homeschool.

So, in summary, I strongly endorse the passage of HB1043.

If there are any questions about this testimony, please do not hesitate to contact me at david.lawrence.pca@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

David Lawrence