

Senator William Smith, Chairman
And Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
Maryland Senate
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: **SB 550** – Correctional Facilities – Transgender, Nonbinary and Intersex Inmates **OPPOSED**

Dear Chairman Smith and Committee Members,

I strongly oppose SB 550 that would allow biological male prisoners who identify as female to be housed in a women's correctional facility in a cell with a biological woman. This legislation places women inmates in serious danger of attack.

Women inmates deserve to be treated with respect and housed in a safe environment. There is no safety for a biological woman placed in a cell with a biological male even if the biological male identifies as female. The inherent privacy limitations in a correctional setting (showers, toilets) leave inmates vulnerable under existing circumstances. Housing biological males in a women's facility would increase this danger to an unacceptable level. It is not difficult to see why male inmates would choose to make such a declaration and be housed in a women's facility. In the State of Washington, this practice has led to attacks on women and resulted in at least one pregnancy.

Respectful treatment of transgender, nonbinary or intersex individuals cannot override safety concerns for the much larger population of any given correctional facility. Separate housing for transgender, nonbinary, and intersex inmates within the correctional facility of their biological gender is the safest alternative for all inmates.

SB 550 would make women inmates in Maryland correctional facilities less safe. This is yet another step in what appears to be a movement to degrade the unique characteristics and biology of women by removing separate (and thereby safe) places for women.

Please give SB 550 an **UNFAVORABLE** report.

Thank you for your time,

Sarah Price
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