



TESTIMONY FOR HB0850
Schools, Prekindergarten Programs, and County Boards of Education -
Discrimination

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Wilkins

Committee: Ways and Means

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0850 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state. We have over 30,000 members across the state.

Our members do not support discrimination in any shape or form. They are specifically concerned when that discrimination involves public funds that are being given to a private school.

Schools that take public money should not be allowed to discriminate. This bill would preclude any county board, public pre-school or public primary or secondary school, non-public pre-school that receives state funds, or non-public primary or secondary school that receives state funds from discriminating against or refusing enrollment to a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

There are exclusions for schools that have always enrolled a single gender or schools that are affiliated with a specific religion (although accommodation should be made for the student).

Public funds should be used to ensure that all of our children have a good education. Diverting funds from public schools, which accept all students, to private schools, which can discriminate is not only a poor use of funds, but the outcome for the students and all of us is very poor.

We support the bill and we recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.