

CHERYL C. KAGAN
Legislative District 17
Montgomery County



Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Suite 2 West
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
301-858-3134 · 410-841-3134
800-492-7122 Ext. 3134
Fax 301-858-3665 · 410-841-3665
Cheryl.Kagan@senate.state.md.us

Vice Chair
Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee

Joint Audit Committee
Joint Committee on Federal Relations

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Council President Gabe Albornoz
Council Office Building
100 Maryland Ave., 6th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Bill 4-22: Human Rights & Civil Liberties - Public Accommodations - Gender Inclusive Restrooms
FAVORABLE

Dear President Albornoz and members of the Montgomery County Council:

As you may know, Del. Jared Solomon and I introduced [SB486 \(HB572\)](#) during the 2022 Legislative Session. This bill would have required the same simple, inexpensive fix incorporated in [Bill 4-22](#). Though our efforts at the state level have not yet been successful, I hope that Montgomery County will join 5 states, 4 major U.S. cities, and Baltimore and Howard Counties by enacting this common sense legislation.

We all use public, single-occupancy bathrooms on a regular basis-- in planes, hospitals, our homes, and more. Making these restrooms gender-specific (female/male) restricts access and can create challenges. [Bill 4-22](#) would fix this problem by requiring businesses with single restrooms to affix an inexpensive, gender-neutral sign to the bathroom door.

Women face longer wait times for bathrooms ([an average of 6+ minutes](#)) than men, who are delayed by approximately just 11 seconds. Labeling restrooms with signage for any gender can reduce wait times for women to [less than 1.5 minutes](#).

Many buildings have already incorporated single-occupancy restrooms, understanding that gender-inclusive restrooms are family-friendly, enabling parents to assist their children. They are also more accessible and comfortable for people with caregivers.

Trans- and non-binary people can be at risk when using gender-specific facilities. In a national survey, [60% of transgender people](#) avoid public restrooms due to apprehension about being confronted. This a real fear-- [12% have been verbally harassed; 9% were denied access; 1% were physically attacked; and 1% were sexually assaulted](#). In fact, [36% of trans- or non-binary students](#) with restricted bathroom or locker room access reported being sexually assaulted in 2019.

I urge you to vote favorably on Bill 4-22.