

Dear Ms. Rickman:

I clicked a link to read the bill's actual text.

(<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/council/pdf/bill/2007/23-07.pdf>)

Wow! What a boatload of rash, open-ended, ill-defined "musts" this bill appears to legislate. The part about the bathrooms might be just the tip of the iceberg. The problem with this bill is that it appears to enable lots of potentially ill-advised initiatives. The vagueness of the specific measures, along with the strong language, should worry any thinking person.

Victoria, Gaithersburg

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To the Montgomery County Council:

I am not in favor of Bill 23-07. If you value supporting transgender males by allowing them to use facilities designated for females, my suggestion would be to provide the funds and build separate facilities for them.

I am extremely concerned about this bill. One among many issues that concerns me as a married woman and mother is sexual predators and voyeurism. We battle this every day in our society. Please do not contribute more to it. I urge you not to vote for this bill!

Sincerely,  
Amy, 20877

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Dear Concerned School Official:

While on a Federal level efforts to pass a gender non-discrimination law have been dropped by its sponsor because of strong opposition to this concept, Montgomery County Council has blindly forged ahead ignoring citizens concerns. The County is poised to pass a gender non-discrimination law on November 13, 2007. This social experiment is ill-conceived and ignores the fact that no one has studied the effect that even one transgender teacher could have on children's gender identity development.

While it is hard to believe, on October 15th the council decided to amend the bill to open health clubs and school gym female locker facilities to full body males claiming the opposite sex gender identity but who have not had gender reassignment surgery. There are other concerns as well about the bill. Please see attachments.

Will Montgomery County become the next transgendered schoolteacher's Mecca? Could your private school be forced to hire a transgender? Could such a hiring effect the business and survival of your school?

YOU DECIDE! THE VOTE ON THIS BILL IS NOVEMBER 13, 2007. DON'T DELAY ACTION. CALL AND E-MAIL YOUR COUNTY COUNCIL NOW.

Sincerely,  
Ruth, M.D.

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Dear Mr. Leggett:

I am writing you in regard to Bill 23-07. I have received information about this bill from Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays & Gays (PFOX).

Bill 23-07 appears quite similar to legislation that was proposed in Albany County, New York ,some years ago; the Albany County legislation was withdrawn after sustained pressure from concerned citizens. It appears that Bill 23-07 would confer special rights upon people who suffer from gender identity disorder. The clear intention of the bill is to establish a public policy in favor of cross-dressing and transsexuality, and to require employers, businesses, and public accommodations to accept this behavior.

This bill should not be passed for the following reasons: (1) Bill 23-07 jeopardizes the safety of women and girls by opening public women's restroom facilities to males who assert a female "gender identity;" (2) Crossdressing and transsexuality, unlike characteristics such as race, color and national origin, are chosen behaviors that have nothing to do with a person's identity and should not be accorded special legal protections; (3) Bill 23-07's language regarding "actual or perceived gender" is unconstitutionally vague and overbroad; (4) Bill 23-07 would create an unconstitutional infringement on the free speech of Christians and others who disagree with the notion that transgendered behavior is an acceptable lifestyle choice; and (5) Bill 23-07 would create a climate where young people could be misled into seeing transsexuality - the (often irreversible) mutilation of one's body in a futile attempt to "become" a member of the opposite sex - as an attractive lifestyle alternative, when it is actually a manifestation of treatable mental illness.

Persons suffering from gender identity disorder should be treated with compassion and encouraged to seek help to overcome that disorder. However, while such persons have all the rights available to other United States citizens, those rights do not compel governments to redefine the word "gender" simply to accommodate the confusion of those who identify as

"transgender." Bill 23-07 is a classic example of special interest legislation that runs contrary to the best interests of the general public. If this legislation is passed, I would strongly urge you to veto it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,  
S.

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Good Morning,  
Letter to the Editor:

While Governor O'Malley is attempting to balance the state budget on the backs of Montgomery County taxpayers, the County Council is considering legislation that would render another severe blow to our community. The bill numbered 23-07, Gender Identity, is disguised as an anti-discrimination issue. However, "gender identity" is classified as a disorder by the American Psychological Association. If this bill were to pass, employers would be forced to hire individuals with a mental disorder. Lacking uni-sex public accommodations, the bill would result in embarrassing rest room encounters. Even worse, the doors would be open for sexual predators to come into rest rooms to prey on their victims. The definition of marriage upheld by the Maryland courts as only between a man and a woman would be threatened. Two biological men with one having gender identity as a woman could present themselves for marriage in a civil or religious setting. Religious liberties would be threatened as this gender identity bill would be in conflict with the beliefs of many faiths. I have attended two town hall meetings held by Councilmember Michael Knapp and at both meetings this bill has been brought up. There have only been speakers including myself in opposition to this bill, but no one spoke in support. We elect council members to uphold the laws of a civil society. The council members who support this bill appear more intent in performing a social experiment with potentially disastrous results. Please vote "no" on bill 23-07, Gender Identity!

Robert  
Gaithersburg, MD

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Dear Councilmember Praisner,

I just read Bill 2307. As a citizen of Montgomery County, I am quite concerned about the potential ramifications this may have in inducing intolerance and bigotry directed at people of faith.

If you'll please take the time to investigate this matter, I'm sure you'll discover that hatred and intolerance against Christians is by far the greatest cause of wars and atrocities throughout the world. You can explore this for yourself at [www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com), a website for Voice of the Martyrs, a well-respected organization that tracks persecution throughout the world. This year, 200 million Christians will be mentally or physically tortured or martyred for their faith. What are you as a leader doing to keep such hatred and atrocities from spreading to our free country? If any group of people should be protected from intolerance, would this not seem to be a priority?

I believe sex is a sacred union between a man and a woman in marriage. I don't expect others who don't share my beliefs to think it is sacred anymore than I'd expect them to take communion or get baptized. I don't "hate" those who have different beliefs. All I want is the freedom to teach my children what our religion considers to be sacred.

There is a loud, intolerant group of people that wish to keep me from doing that...and they want to use you to accomplish their goal.

We've already removed our children from MCPS because of a concern over the intolerant climate and lack of political and philosophical diversity within the schools. Thousands of families in Montgomery County are forced to pay for private education or home school their children in order to protect their religious freedom. Not only are we assuming the cost of our children's education in addition to paying our taxes for public schools, but we are losing one income in doing so. There is no other group that suffers the economic discrimination imposed by county decisions to such a degree. Will this bill protect our rights or only continue to oppress?

I ask you to please read the bill again from a new point of view. Is your bill intending to silence my religious beliefs that marriage and sexuality are sacred? Are you prohibiting me from saying so? Are you preventing employers or religious groups from communicating their beliefs? Are you showing intolerance towards people of faith? Is your bill going to help keep Christians in our nation from joining the 200 million who are oppressed for their faith each year? Will it contribute towards hatred and bigotry of people of faith? Are you going to cause Christians in this county to continue to bear the economic hardships we already experience due to intolerance? Will you be developing and distributing materials and information that teach others that my beliefs are wrong? Are you promoting the agenda of one group of people at the expense of a clearly oppressed group?

Is that really what you want to accomplish?

I believe God created men and women across the spectrum of masculinity and femininity...as beautifully diverse as all of His creation. I also believe, we've allowed a very political and threatening homosexual voice to classify and categorize people according to gender...and unfortunately actively recruit within our school system to increase their numbers and benefit their political cause...at the expense of our children's identity. Now, they want to force their beliefs upon other citizens.

Is your bill evangelizing for their cause or is it truly intended to promote tolerance? Legislating what others may believe in their churches and proclaim as sacred is not promoting tolerance. It models bigotry.

I believe you want to bring an end to discrimination and intolerance and protect the freedoms of all citizens. Please see what you are truly saying in this bill...and rethink it.

Sincerely,  
Kathryn  
Gaithersburg

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Council members:

If you are really concerned with creating a new class of citizens that doesn't fit in either males or females bathrooms then provide tax incentives for companies/schools that build special facilities for them and they will come, but don't try to impose your lack of sensitivity to several dangerous situations that would develop to others that represent the majority of the population normal sexual orientation of all ethnic/color/race/religion background.

What would be the guidelines for a man that says he thinks more like females when he were to disrobe in front of a little girl and expose his genitalia in a girls bathroom?

That is a blatant immoral and perverse proposition you are dealing with. Your total disregard to the general population and especially normal women/girls safety is the most disgusting thing I ever heard from any politician who has a job paid by tax payers and who is responsible to keep it safe.

From a concerned current resident in this fast decaying county.

B, Silver Spring

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Dear Ms. Ervin,

As one of your constituents I am writing to caution you with respect to Bill 23-07, of which you are a co-sponsor. There are serious issues that this Bill raises with respect to the common good and with respect to the idea that 'transgenderism' is a normative social self-identity. Allow me to explain further, in the hope of bringing more information to bear on this very momentous possible change in the laws and life of the County. Laws against discrimination should only cover that which is immutable and readily observable to the stranger to prevent discrimination by such characteristics as race and ethnic group, for example.

As well-intentioned as this law may be, it seems strange and wrong to me to legally protect the fact, in this case, that people who can't accept their own sex should have the legal right to demand that others accept them as the sex they are not, and can never truly be, because one's sex truly is inborn! If that is not an indication of a psychological problem, then I don't know what is!

To give an example, I had a personal experience that left me confused and intimidated during two encounters with a person who clearly was experiencing gender identity issues. I went (for the first time) into a small local shop to look around, and also asked some questions of a man working in the shop. After leaving the shop, I kept thinking about a certain item I'd seen there, and decided to go back the next day.

Imagine my surprise (and embarrassment as well) when I saw that the man I'd spoken with the day before was entirely dressed and made up like a woman. I have always taken people as they come, in all their variety, but this was more than I could handle. I was so taken aback and confounded by the transformation of this man into a 'woman' that I was unable to speak with, or even face him, at all and left the shop in a state of confusion, without following up on the item of interest to me. The situation was simply too provoking. I believe that many people would have been similarly intimidated as I was, and I don't think it makes sense to encourage more of this sort of provocative deception. He had to know that it would be a bizarre and off-putting thing to do. If a person presents himself in a confusing, bizarre and/or off-putting manner, how does it make sense to require **by law** that all others must accommodate him/her? Such accommodation should be voluntary and based on ones experience of the particular person, which is likely to happen among his personal acquaintance anyway.

In addition to the above, I know of a young woman (age 22) who came home from college one day and, out of the blue, told her parents that they were now expected to regard her as a male. Right. Do you have kids? The parents were justifiably confounded and alarmed. Her mother told me recently that the daughter finally decided to undertake therapy because of this confusion within herself. That should be a clue in itself. Therapy is available! You can't undertake therapy for that which is immutable!

A person experiencing gender identity confusion cannot be fully trusted psychologically because he/she does not trust his/her own self, psychologically. In addition, Gender Identity Disorder is a bona fide psychiatric disorder. Having grown up with a sister who suffered from various degrees of mental illness, and who is now unable to care for herself, I am aware of the difficulties and petty tyrannies imposed by people with emotional/psychiatric problems, and I have extraordinary experience and reason to feel extremely concerned about the proposed legislation.

I submit, therefore, that it is not consistent with the protection of the common good to allow people with certain non-immutable peculiarities, however wonderful the person may be, to be protected legally more than others. While I'm sure this bill is well-meant, I believe it has unusually high potential to cause more problems than it solves.

Sincerely,

E.  
Silver Spring

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Hello Councilmembers!

I am writing in regards to the upcoming vote on November 13 on the transgender discrimination bill. While I abhor discrimination of human rights in any form whatsoever, I must express that I also abhor the mere thought of my 16 year old daughter having to share the school "girl's" bathroom with a male under any circumstances. Let me be clear, I feel that if a male has undergone transgender operations, then they have taken steps to sufficiently qualify themselves to share the rights and privileges of the preferred gender. However, adding the "public accommodations" phrase to the discrimination bill is confusing the issue beyond the intended purpose of the bill I'm sure. By adding this phrase, I'm deeply concerned about the abuse it may allow in our public schools, as well as, other public venues by those who merely "say" that they have transgender intentions. Until such abuse can be guaranteed to be avoided, the consideration of such a change to our kids' school environments is ridiculous. I can assure you that I will do everything within my power as a tax paying citizen in Montgomery County to counter this bill, so long as it contains that phrase.

Most Sincerely,

L'Tanya  
Gaithersburg

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November 2, 2007

Re: No one breaks the law in Montgomery County no matter what temptations are given them by the County Council.

Dear Councilman Leventhal

Thank you for responding to my letter of October 25, 2007 concerning whether or not the counsel should legislate shared nudity. I appreciate hearing "your interpretation of the amendment." I am glad "you know what the amendment will say." It is interesting that the exact wording of the amendment has not yet been released to the citizens of our county.

Obviously, I would like to get the exact wording of the amendment and I believe the citizen's of the County deserve to have the exact wording of this amendment.

Only after the exact wording of the amendment has been given to the citizens of this county and appropriate time has been given for people to respond to such a controversial issue, should the vote be allowed on Bill 23-07.

I have asked for a delay in the process because we have not yet received the amendment, either in writing or as it will be placed in the bill. I have yet to receive a response to my request.

If I understand your defense of the bill, it appears to be that no one would dare use the provision to excuse committing a crime. And that the laws such as those existing against rape or sexual assault are sufficient to protect the safety of all women in showers and lockers everywhere. If your reasoning was correct there would be no rape, peeping toms, indecent exposure or sexual assault in Montgomery County because Montgomery Council law alone is sufficient. I'm sure that if you informed the mother of the 4-year-old that was taken from a church in Laurel on October 25, 2007 and sexually assaulted that such should not have occurred, she would be very reassured.

Bill 23-07 is a direct assault on women's privacy rights and their safety.

Bill 23-07 legislates indecent exposure and callously ignores the rights of women who do not wish to be exposed to a stranger's male genitalia.

Bill 23-07 is frightening to women because it provides new opportunities that had never existed before, for pedophilia, rape, and sexual assault.

It opens a window of opportunity for individuals to state or masquerade as having gender identity disorder and be provided entry into the most private areas of the woman's life.

It is indeed amazing that after ignoring women's rights of privacy, the bill also fails to defend women's safety. The bill would allow male individuals into female health club lockers and showers without allowing either the health club who is responsible for the safety of the people on their premise to document either their gender or transitional status with requests for court order, physician letter, birth certificate, passport or driver's license.

I know your reasoning is that the law is sufficient and that all individuals in Montgomery County will obey the law no matter what temptations are placed in front of them by the County Council and Bill 23-07.

I really don't think anyone in Montgomery County actually believes such reasoning.

As I understand it your responsibility is to represent and value all of Montgomery County Citizens. Why are you ignoring the vulnerability of half a million women and children in Montgomery County? Your job is to protect all of the citizens of Montgomery County.

Delay the vote on the bill 23-07. Give the citizens of Montgomery County the “exact wording of the amendment.” Allow time for the citizens to become aware of the issues and to express to you their concerns. Listen to the citizens of Montgomery County.

Sincerely,  
Ruth, MD

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Dear Editor,

WHAT COULD POSSIBLY BE NEXT – MEN IN THE LADIES ROOMS? HOW MUCH MORE NONSENSE CAN WE TAKE? As if the new “health” education in our schools was not enough, now comes legislation proposed by the Montgomery County Council which, if passed, will allow men to dress like women in the work place, use ladies locker rooms, bathrooms and other facilities as if they were female. Of course, women will be allowed to use the men’s locker rooms, bathrooms, and dress like men in their place of employment.

I know, you think I don’t know what I am talking about...just check out proposed changes to the Non-discrimination-Gender Bill No. 23-07 which states, in part, “...an employer must allow an employee to appear, groom, and dress consistent with the employee’s gender identity.” There is also a recommended amendment to let a person use facilities based on the person’s gender identity—not to be confused with a “person’s assigned sex at birth.”

And you thought President Bush took your privacy away with the Patriot Act...suddenly that doesn’t seem so bad does it?

Bunny, MD

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Ladies and gentlemen, public servants and advocates for equality, all:

Please allow me to express my complete and unequivocal support for the legislation that I understand is before you, legislation which will, among other things, compel all health clubs operating in Montgomery County to allow pre-operative transgendered men to use the bathrooms and locker rooms currently set aside for those who have no penis.

We all know how expensive the operations are, that pre-operative transgendered men need, in order to physically manifest the truth that already exists, in their interior lives. I

am glad to see the Montgomery County Council has, with this new legislation, come to the aid of those who cannot afford the health care that they need, in this County.

By compelling health clubs to institute what SOME unenlightened people might call "unisex" bathrooms and locker rooms at their facilities, the Montgomery County Council is providing pre-operative transgendered men with the opportunity to divest themselves of one minor, totally unimportant physical trait that sows confusion among the masses, causing those masses to assume that the woman which inhabits the body that is possessed of that trait is, in fact, a man.

And all for free.

Although I don't, personally, know any woman who is a member of any health club, all of the women whom I DO know are EXPERTS at wielding knives and other sharp objects. My GRANDMOTHER could de-bone a chicken in less than five minutes, and I'm certain that the women of today are no less adept and skillful. It is with this in mind that I congratulate you for your willingness to try new and creative ways to deliver free health care to even the most marginalized members of society: pre-operative transgendered males.

So, thank you for your brilliance. I do, however, have a couple of questions:

1. Will the new legislation mandate that health clubs in Montgomery County keep such things as gauze, on-hand, or will the pre-operative transgendered males need to bring their own?
2. Is there a law that exists, in Montgomery County, that mandates that any knives carried by any woman in this County be sterile, or should pre-operative transgendered males need to ensure that their tetanus shots are up-to-date?
3. Will pre-operative transgendered males who walk into a women's bathroom or locker room, in any health club in Montgomery County, need to administer their own anesthetic, beforehand? The reason I ask is that we all know that there is no real need for the County to provide such things, since whatever pain that might be experienced, when a knife makes contact with a penis, is slight and soon forgotten.

Again, many thanks to all of you for your ingenuity and determination, in your quest to provide "good government" to ALL of those whose blessings include residency in Montgomery County.

Your obedient servant,  
Larry, MD

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Council Members,

As a lawyer, I have carefully reviewed the Montgomery County, Maryland, proposed transgender law, the county attorney's opinion respecting it, and the proposed amendment per committee, and I have spoken to 7 out of 9 of the council members' staff on the phone. It is clear to me that on November 13th, unless we get heavy public outcry against this, the county council will pass a law which will put people with male genitals in female locker rooms and restrooms around the county (people who are transgenders but who are still legally male and still have male genitals). Yes, my daughter who is ten years old may be walking into the women's' locker room at the Germantown indoor public pool and see a naked person with male genitals standing right across from her and there would be no legal recourse against this outrage provided the person was a transgender (suffered from a mental disorder wherein he believed that inside he was a she). The same will be true in the girl's locker rooms and rest rooms in the public and private-non-parochial schools. I say if they want to offer transgenders locker rooms and rest rooms per their gender identities (as opposed to their legal sex status), let them spend the money and build them separate facilities around the county. Do not force local health clubs to open up their locker rooms to this. Do not force this on our children in their school locker rooms and in the public locker rooms around our county.

Furthermore, under the current formulation of the proposed bill, employers of employees who teach and work with children would not be able to "discriminate" against hiring transgenders or preventing them from dressing per their gender identities. So your local kindergarten teacher may next year sound like a man, have physical attributes of a man but be dressed in a skirt, heels and makeup. This is a shocking daily predicament for children, many of whom may have limited positive male role models. The law right now provides that there shall be no discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, however, that has no dress code component which is so critical in the case of transgenders.

One other aspect of this bill is also very unfair and heavy handed (although I will say that no one else seems aware of this issue or believes it even exists). The anti-discrimination in housing provision contains an exception for an owner-occupant looking for a roommate but there is no similar exception for a renter looking for a roommate, even if that person is looking to sub-lease to a roommate who would be sharing a bedroom. Hence, people who can not afford to own and be owners are at a distinct disadvantage in their rights to find a roommate. A woman renter looking to sublease to another person on Craigslist could be found to be discriminating if she turns away a transgender male even if it is to share her own bedroom.

In every case, I see this law as a threat to women and children.

Best to you,  
Susan

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Dear Council Members;

Is "Indecent Exposure" just hyperbole as Duchy would suggest? In Montgomery County, it can put a person in jail for 3 years. That is not hyperbole.

What is indecent exposure? Clearly a man who exposes himself to a minor girl in this State in a public place would be guilty of this today in Montgomery County (and maybe other crimes as well). One local lawyer's website describes indecent exposure as follows: "A person who intentionally and deliberately exposes a portion or portions of his/her private body parts, i.e. their genitalia, in an environment where such an exposure is likely to be considered a violation of the prevalent standards of decency may be charged with indecent exposure. Depending on the state in the United States where the offense is charged, the charge may be charged as a misdemeanor or a felony. In many states, an act of indecent exposure to a minor is charged as a felony."

What will be the effect of your proposed transgender bill on the indecent exposure law? Are you really willing to say that a person who exposes his male genitals with full frontal nudity in a locker room to a minor girl is not committing indecent exposure? Can you legally and effectively degrade the standard of decency in our county with this bill without the slightest consideration on how this will impact our children? Have you even consulted with the State's Attorney General's Office to get their comments?

Please think about this. You are in effect either 1. Encouraging transgender men to commit indecent exposure in front of minors which will land them in jail for three years and have a drastic and detrimental impact on the minors (this injury has been and is still recognized at law as a severe and serious one) or you are 2. Directly lowering the standard of decency in our county so that there is no such thing as indecent exposure. If there is no indecent exposure for one group, then there is not such thing as indecent exposure; Judge Debelius ruled this last year fairly clearly.

Below is an email I sent to a State's Attorney who prosecuted and lost a famous indecent exposure case in Montgomery County last year and who now has a higher position under Mr. Gansler. I am hoping you will get some input from him that will make you see the other side of this issue.

As a mother of a ten year girl who sees people changing their bathing suits in the public area of the women's locker room at the Germantown Indoor Pool (there are no private dressing rooms there and it is normal for the girls and women to be nude in front of each other), I am deeply distressed that in two weeks it may be lawful for a man to expose his genitals in front of her and I would have no legal recourse. Is this not a paramount concern? Why do you not provide them with access to family dressing rooms and rest rooms and single user unisex bathrooms and rest rooms and accommodate both sides of this issue? Do not be too cheap here to do the right thing.

This is a paramount issue to many of your constituents.

Thank you,

Susan , MD

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10-2-07- Reverend J. Grace Harley Public Comment Montgomery County Council Bill 23-07

Good afternoon President Praisner and county council members, I am very grateful for this opportunity to address you. I am Reverend J. Grace Harley, host of God's Will and Grace and GNM news TV programs. I wish to invite you to watch next Sunday at 11 p.m. channel 19 when I am celebrating 15 years of having been delivered by the grace of God from the transgender lifestyle.(St. Luke 13:13) please visit [www.GraceHarley.com](http://www.GraceHarley.com) for more information. I am concerned that my story and my very ministry which is to all people wanting to live a heterosexual life style could be endangered due to the anti-discrimination clauses and language of bill 23-07.

I lived for 18 years as a transgendered man until Jesus called me to himself (St. Luke13:11, 12) I once wanted to have sex reassignment surgery. I thank God today, I could not afford it. I later while I was in my 20's I went to my Gynecologist to ask for a hysterectomy. He refused. But I was able to get testosterone injections.

Today, I am all woman, body, mind, and soul. I am no longer Joe; no longer do I have the mind of a male. The transgender lifestyle is all psychological. My faith tells me I am a child of God not a creature of evolution. Genesis 1: 27 "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them."

With this bill, psychotherapists, ministers and pastors counseling a confused transgender youth on biblical principles could not broach the subject of returning to the biological sex because of the prohibition in the Bill against injury to "personal property" which in this case is the identity of that transgendered person. (i.e., see Bill 27-03 line 276 to 280 (27-22). If this bill should pass there should be explicit language which would protect such counseling, as well as freedom of speech in this area and religious beliefs.

Bill 23-07 directs the county to conduct education and other programs to promote equal rights and opportunities of all persons regardless of ... gender identity and to investigate conditions that could result in discrimination... because of gender identity.

If bill 23-07 should pass there should be explicit language including the ex-transgender community in education and anti-discrimination efforts.

Bill 23-07 requires education to promote acceptance ie “equal rights and opportunities” for gender identity and requires education against any “religious prejudice”. I am concerned that such education against “religious prejudice” is really religious intolerance. The bill should be changed to correct this.

Montgomery County should not be contributing to the delinquency of minors. Young people will base life altering decisions on this bill. Throughout America’s history sodomy laws have changed, psychiatry and psychological opinions have changed. But God’s word has not and will never change, and will endure forever.

1 Peter 1:25 “BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURETH FOREVER”.

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It was my distinct honor and pleasure to meet you last Saturday at your Goshen town hall meeting. I enjoyed the opportunity to air my concerns with you about several subjects, chief among them, Bill 2307, which will effectively add transgendered individuals to the ever growing list of "protected classes" in Montgomery County. Other than relationships that evidently exist with council members and transgendered individuals, what possible motivation could the council have spending its valuable time to promote personal, special-interest agendas? How does this even begin to represent the majority of residents Montgomery County?

Furthermore, gender identity disorder, is currently listed as a disorder by the American Psychological Association (APA), please see "DSM-IV 302.85 gender identity disorder in adolescents or adults". Why is the council recommending the addition of the mentally ill to the protected classes of Montgomery County? What is next to be added; pedophilia (DSM-IV 302.2) or sexual sadism (DSM-IV 302.84)? I am using hyperbole to make a point and don't expect these disorders to be introduced as protected classes, but why have any disorders at all on the list?

I would like to think that passage of this bill will have unintended consequences such as impacts on churches, schools, businesses, etc., but I suspect these are the intended consequences of this bill.

Please be the voice of reason and oppose these social engineering efforts and oppose this bill.

Sincerely,

Chris  
Olney

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Dear Ms. Praisner,

I am writing as a citizen of Montgomery County to strongly encourage you to vote **against** Bill 2307.

A change of this magnitude in public policy has far reaching effects and should not be decided solely by a County Council. Across the country voters have been able to determine public policy on homosexuality by having specific ballot measures or propositions on the ballot. This is a moral, religious, social, political, scientific, and health issue that the majority of Americans are still hesitant to embrace. Prudence suggests that more information is needed before the structure of our society is tampered with.

This bill suggests that religions, religious organizations and other private organizations and groups (such as the Boy Scouts of America) may not be allowed to express their fundamental opposition to homosexual practices. These organizations are an integral part of the fabric of this County and have contributed abundantly towards supporting and teaching high moral codes of behavior and citizenship.

In an issue as far reaching as this, the people should decide what the moral code of their society will be, not a local representative body. Montgomery County is a desirable place to live, as witnessed by our housing prices. I have lived in Berkeley, California and I have seen first hand the destructiveness a small, activist political body can wreak on the reputation, desirability, and economy of a locale. Please vote against this ill conceived bill.

Yours, Teressa

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Dear Councilmember Trachtenberg,

Thank you for your response. However, it still does not deal with the specific issue of transgender people having access to women's facilities including restrooms, showers, etc. With all due respect, as a wife, mother and former educator, this is not acceptable to me.

I believe that transgender people should be treated with respect.

But, if accommodations need to be made for them in the area of bathroom and shower facilities, for example, and the council values that so highly, separate funds should be provided to construct such separate facilities for transgender people.

I would also disagree with you that this is not radical legislation.

This is the first time anyone I have spoke to has heard about it. I follow the news faithfully and have never seen it reported in the press. I find it quite radical. And so do many people in the county I have spoken to. They have responded with shock and dismay when I have shared the news with them. I would be interested to see something reported about this legislation in the media via The Washington Post or Times, Gazette, press releases, etc. Otherwise, it appears that the issue is being hidden from the people of Montgomery County in order to be passed quietly by the Council. I hope this is not so.

Sincerely,

Amy

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On 11/5/07, Trachtenberg's Office, Councilmember wrote:

Dear Ms. S:

Thank you for writing to me about my legislation to protect the rights of transgender residents of Montgomery County. I introduced the bill because transgender people face serious discrimination, not only in the workplace, but also in housing, business and banking transactions, and in public accommodations.

Everyone deserves to live and work with equality and dignity. No one should lose a job, or be denied a place to live, because of their gender identity or expression. It's essential that counties like Montgomery County take action on the local level because, so far, most courts have not found that laws prohibiting sexual orientation or gender discrimination apply to transgender people.

This is not radical legislation. In fact, over 100 U.S. jurisdictions have already passed similar legislation, covering 37% of this country's population. This includes 13 states plus the District of Columbia.

I'm glad you're interested in this issue enough to add your voice to the debate, and I hope that you'll write me again in the future if there are other issues that concern you. In the meantime, please continue to pay close attention to what my colleagues and I on the County Council are doing by visiting our website, [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council), or

watching Council news and meetings on Montgomery County Cable TV.

Thank you again for your interest and advocacy.

Cordially,

Duchy Trachtenberg

To all members of the Montgomery County Council,

I am not in favor of Bill 23-07. If you value supporting transgender males by allowing them to use facilities designated for females, my suggestion would be to provide the funds and build separate facilities for them.

I am extremely concerned about this bill. One among many issues that concerns me as a married woman and mother is sexual predators and voyeurism. We battle this every day in our society. Please do not contribute more to it. I urge you not to vote for this bill!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Amy S

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Dear Council:

A major problem I see is that rapist will take advantage of the opportunity to use the opposite sex bathroom to choose their victims. It's not so much about gender identity as it is public safety. Women are already being raped at alarming rates, no more doors need to be opened to opportunistic predators. It's not about discrimination. It's unreasonable for the politicians to put the public at risk of unthinkable acts of violence because a small group of people feel it's their right to use one bathroom over another. I think each politician needs to consider the responsibility they would carry for each woman that is raped because of their stupidity. These women could be their mothers, sisters, aunts, children and so on.

Debra