



# CITY OF HOUSTON

**Sylvester Turner**

Mayor

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April 22, 2021

The Honorable Harold Dutton  
Chair, House Public Education Committee  
Austin, Texas 78711

**Re: House Bill 4042**

Dear Chairman Dutton,

Houston is often recognized as the most diverse city in America. A significant element of that diversity includes our LGBTQ community. They are valued members of our community and contribute economically, socially and culturally. Discrimination against this community, especially the vulnerable transgender student community, is just wrong.

Transgender students already face a great deal of discrimination. A study from Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) reports:

- 75 percent of transgender students felt unsafe at school because of their gender expression.
- 60 percent of transgender students were forced to use a bathroom or locker room that did not match the gender they live every day
- 50 percent of transgender students were unable to use the name or pronoun that matched their gender
- 70 percent of transgender students said they avoided bathrooms because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), a recognized leader in student athletics, argues that transgender students should be treated with a spirit of inclusion and respect:

Over the course of many years, schools have learned and continue to appreciate the value and necessity of accommodating the sport participation interests of students of color, women, students with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, and bisexual students. These are all issues of basic fairness and equity that demand the expansion of our thinking about equal opportunity in sports. The right of transgender students to participate in sports calls for similar considerations of fairness and equal access.

House Bill 4042 will require that students participate in interscholastic athletic events based on their biological sex at birth and enshrine discrimination into law. I implore you to join me in rejecting this legislation and vote against HB 4042.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sylvester Turner".

Sylvester Turner  
Mayor