

From: [Cathy Brennan](#)
To: [Autumn Sandeen](#)
Subject: None of this is personal
Date: Sunday, May 08, 2011 5:36:12 AM

So please don't take it personally. This is about a concern for crafting legislation that doesn't harm women. And I didn't answer your question on PHB because it is rather besides the point what I think a woman is or a female is. We are talking about a legislative fix to the problem of sex stereotyping without examining critically what "gender-related identity" or "gender expression" means. But I will answer you privately, as it seems important to you. Female means you are born with a vagina. That roughly works for the majority of people. I know there are folx who are Intersex and perhaps there are other exceptions, but I am not interested in screwing over females legislatively to protect unicorns. Perhaps this offends you. I am sorry if it hurts your feelings, because I do not want to hurt your feelings.

The definition in HB 235 is flawed and nonsensical, and relies in part of society's understanding of what are "masculine" traits and what are "feminine" traits. The truth is, there are no "masculine" or "feminine" traits. If you want to tell me differently, then I am afraid we don't have common ground.

This bill is coming up again in 2012. I worked on HB 235 because I came in on it late, because a friend asked me to, and I would not kill a bill like that, that late in the game, because I have spent a lot my entire adult life fighting against irrational discrimination. But we have a chance now to draft legislation that will (1) achieve its goals (i.e., banning irrational discrimination) and (2) not harm females.

Surely, as a woman, you have an interest in not harming females by enshrining this definition of gender identity/gender expression into law.

I find it interesting - and I think you should too - that more and more *lesbians* are waking up to the implications of this legislation for females. I'm not concerned about being outnumbered in support on your blog, but I would think you might be very concerned as to how this will play out in Maryland.

I truly hope that you are well,

Cathy

PS - Happy mothers day.