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Chattanooga lawmaker introduces bill, reignites transgender bathroom debate

HB1488 would require the state to support schools facing legal action for restricting transgender students' bathroom choice

By Sam Zern, Campus Editor - January 10, 2018

Chattanooga representative Gerald McCormick (R) introduced a bill to the Tennessee State House of Representatives that would require the state to provide legal or financial assistance to school districts in the instance that they face legal action over the “adoption of a policy requiring students, faculty, and staff to utilize the restroom, locker room or other facility that corresponds to that individual’s biological sex.”

McCormick [said](#) in the Times Free Press that the purpose of HB1488 is to protect poorer counties who may not be able to afford the costs associated with a legal battle over the gendered use of facilities.

“I think the ACLU will try to find some poor county and go after them,” McCormick said in the article.

House Minority Leader Mike Stewart (D-Nashville), however, was quoted in the Times Free Press article saying that he was disappointed that the debate was resurfacing, as he hoped the state had moved past it.

Last year, a bill introduced by Sen. Mae Beavers (R-Mt. Juliet) that would have required all students in public schools and universities to use the bathrooms and locker rooms that corresponded with their sex at birth [failed](#) to pass in the Tennessee Senate after failing to receive proper motion from the Senate Education Committee. Beavers is currently in the process of running for Tennessee governor.

The bill was also [withdrawn](#) in the House by its sponsor, Rep. Susan Lynn (R-Mt. Juliet), who said that the bill needed to be tweaked before being reintroduced at a later session. At the time of publication, there is yet no indication that last year’s bill will be reintroduced.

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