

CAROLYN A. QUATTROCKI
Chief Deputy Attorney General

LEONARD J. HOWIE III
Deputy Attorney General

CARRIE J. WILLIAMS
Deputy Attorney General

SHARON S. MERRIWEATHER
Deputy Attorney General

ZENITA WICKHAM HURLEY
Chief, Equity, Policy, and Engagement



PETER V. BERNS
General Counsel

CHRISTIAN E. BARRERA
Chief Operating Officer

STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

ANTHONY G. BROWN
Attorney General

February 27, 2025

TO: The Honorable Brian Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

FROM: Adam Spangler
Legislative Aide, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

RE: Senate Bill 733 – Constitutional Officers – Gender–Neutral Language–
Support

The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) urges the Committee to give Senate Bill 733 a favorable report. The proposed constitutional amendment aims to implement gender-neutral language concerning constitutional officers in the Maryland Constitution. This amendment represents an important step towards inclusivity and equality within our state's governing documents.

The language we use matters; it shapes our perception of roles and individuals within our society. By adopting gender-neutral terminology, we acknowledge and respect the diverse identities of all Marylanders. This is not the first time that Maryland has adopted gender neutral language. The Maryland Gender Neutral Reference in the Maryland Constitution Amendment, also known as Question 1, was on the November 2, 1982 ballot in Maryland as a legislatively referred constitutional amendment, where it was approved by nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of voters. The measure replaced gender specific reference in the Maryland Constitution with a gender neutral reference pertaining to imprisonment for debt.¹

Furthermore, this initiative aligns with similar efforts undertaken in various states, emphasizing the importance of language in legislative processes. Currently nine state

¹ Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, "Referenda Elections for Maryland 1968-1990,"

constitutions use gender neutral language.² By supporting **Senate Bill 733**, we can position Maryland as a leader in promoting gender equality and inclusiveness.

This amendment not only modernizes our Constitution but also ensures that it reflects the values of fairness and equality that we aspire to uphold as a society. For the foregoing reasons, the Office of the Attorney General urges the Committee to report **Senate Bill 733** favorably.

cc: The Honorable Senator Nancy J. King
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee Members

² *South Dakota Constitutional Amendment E, gender-neutral Constitutional Language Amendment (2024)*. Ballotpedia. (n.d.). [https://ballotpedia.org/South_Dakota_Constitutional_Amendment_E,_Gender-Neutral_Constitutional_Language_Amendment_\(2024\)#Gender-specific_language_in_state_constitutions](https://ballotpedia.org/South_Dakota_Constitutional_Amendment_E,_Gender-Neutral_Constitutional_Language_Amendment_(2024)#Gender-specific_language_in_state_constitutions)