



BEFORE THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 427 :  
Action for Change of Name – Waiver of Publication Requirement**

We are writing on behalf of Metro DC PFLAG in support of the purpose of [HB0427](#). This bill would promote a safe and private name change experience for many individuals, particularly those who are going through a gender transition. While, at present, local county courts may grant waivers to the publication requirement (See Maryland Rule 15-901), no standards for the grant of such waivers currently exist. Publication can unnecessarily pose a threat to transgender individuals by publicly outing them to their communities.

The transgender community is disproportionately in danger of harassment and discrimination. Publishing their birth name and requiring an explanation for the reason it is being changed can be very uncomfortable in a transitional process that is already difficult enough. Publicly outing them to their peers can lead to dangerous and potentially harmful situations that can be avoided with a private process.

Research has shown that giving transgender people the opportunity to legally change their name is extremely affirming, [has a positive effect on their mental health and well-being](#). For transgender adults, having identification documents consistent with their gender identity and chosen name enables them to access employment, safe housing or shelter, public health benefits and health care services with less fear of discrimination and victimization.

The clear ability to secure a waiver of the publication requirement would create a safer and more private name change process for our transgender community. We look forward to a full discussion of this matter, which is so vitally important to those impacted.

We believe that together, we can achieve equality and safety for all.

Thank you,

Nicolle Campa She | Her | Hers  
Metro DC PFLAG  
Board President

Mark Eckstein He | Him | His  
Metro DC PFLAG  
MD Advocacy Co-Chair

David Fishback He | Him | His  
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[www.pflagdc.org](http://www.pflagdc.org)

Keeping Families Together!