



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Acting Secretary

March 2, 2021

The Honorable Chairperson Shane E. Pendergrass  
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee  
Room 241  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: HB1203 – Certificates of Birth and Marriage Certificates - Issuance of New Certificates - Sex Designation – Letter of Information**

Dear Chairperson Pendergrass and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of information for House Bill (HB) 1203 – Certificates of Birth and Marriage Certificates - Issuance of New Certificates - Sex Designation.

The Vital Statistics Administration has identified the following technical challenges regarding the implementation of HB 1203 by the Vital Statistics Administration (VSA):

- The bill would allow for a parent to make a written request without having to provide formal documents to have the sex designation changed on a birth certificate. Previously documentation, like a court order, was required. This change could create an operational impact on MDH.
- In accordance with national best practices, VSA is implementing a modification of the current birth certificate form to use the gender-neutral titles parent/parent that are printed next to each parent's name to be implemented immediately. Should this proposed bill be passed as written, the current language related to designations of mother, father, or parent, would differ from the current practice of using gender neutral parent titles for all applicants.
- Further, this bill proposes that sex designations include non-binary and other. While our current birth system does not include these options and cannot be modified to include them, our new system, operational in 2022, will include these options.

I hope this information is useful. If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me at [webster.ye@maryland.gov](mailto:webster.ye@maryland.gov) / (410) 260-3190 or Heather Shek, Director of Governmental Affairs at [heather.shek@maryland.gov](mailto:heather.shek@maryland.gov) and at the same phone number.

Sincerely,

Webster Ye  
Assistant Secretary for Health Policy