

SB164 testimony in Favor.pdf

Uploaded by: Ariana Kelly

Position: FAV



www.marylandwomen.org

51 Monroe Street, Ste. 1034 – Rockville, Maryland 20850
301-610-4523
www.marylandwomen.org

Maryland Commission for Women

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Ariana Kelly,
Executive Director

Support for SB 164 – Terminology and Obsolete References - Maryland State Firefighters Association and Related Terms

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee,

The Maryland Commission for Women is in strong support of Senate Bill 164, which formally updates the statute to use gender neutral terms "firefighter" and "squad member" instead of the antiquated "firefighter" and "squadman." This proposal comes after the Maryland State Firefighters Association (MSFA) made the formal decision to adopt a new, inclusive name.

On June 18, 2024, the MSFA made history by officially announcing its transition to the Maryland State Firefighters Association—a change that honors the service of all firefighters, regardless of gender and signals to future generations of female firefighters that they are fully welcomed in the profession.

The Maryland Commission for Women is charged with working across the state to advance women's workplace rights and opportunities. We worked for several years with the association formerly known as the Maryland State Firemen's Association to urge them to take this step to modernize its name. Now, we are making a similar request to the legislature to update the statute to reflect the same inclusivity.

SB 164 is a necessary next step in ensuring that Maryland's laws reflect this progress. Updating outdated references in state statute will reinforce our commitment to gender equity and ensure that Maryland's firefighters—men and women alike—are properly recognized for their contributions.

The Commission respectfully urges this committee to pass SB 164 and affirm the inclusive vision set forth by the Maryland State Firefighters Association.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Letter_Support_SB164_Womens_Caucus.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Kecia Munroe

Position: FAV

DEL. DANA JONES, DISTRICT 30A
President

DEL. MICHELE GUYTON, DISTRICT 42B
1st Vice-President

DEL. JENNIFER WHITE HOLLAND, DISTRICT 10
2nd Vice-President

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At Large

DEL. KYM TAYLOR, DISTRICT 23
At Large

WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF MARYLAND
THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

February 3, 2025

To: Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

On behalf of the **Maryland Women's Caucus**, we are pleased to express our **unanimous support** for **SB 164: Terminology and Obsolete References – Maryland State Firefighters Association and Related Terms**, sponsored by **Senator Cheryl Kagan**. This important legislation updates outdated, gendered terminology in state law, such as replacing “firemen” and “rescue squad men” with more inclusive terms like **firefighters**, ensuring that all of Maryland’s first responders are properly recognized and represented.

For decades, **women and non-male first responders have served with distinction**, yet they continue to be excluded by antiquated language that does not reflect the reality of today’s workforce. **SB 164 affirms the contributions of all firefighters and emergency responders, regardless of gender**, and ensures that Maryland’s laws reflect a **modern, inclusive approach** to public service.

This bill is not merely about terminology—it is about **representation, inclusion, and equity**. Words matter, and by updating these references, Maryland sends a strong message to young women and girls that **they belong in the fire service and emergency response fields**. Removing outdated language also **promotes diversity and respect within our public safety agencies**, reinforcing the values of fairness and equal opportunity.

We **respectfully urge** the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to issue a **favorable report** for **SB 164**. By passing this legislation, Maryland will take an important step toward **ensuring that all first responders—regardless of gender—are acknowledged and appreciated for their dedication and service to our communities**.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We appreciate your commitment to making Maryland a more equitable and inclusive state.

Letter for SB164.pdf

Uploaded by: Mike McKay

Position: FAV

MIKE MCKAY
Legislative District 1
Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties



Annapolis Office
James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 416
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3565 • 301-858-3565
800-492-7122 Ext. 3565
Mike.McKay@senate.state.md.us

Judicial Proceedings Committee
Executive Nominations Committee

Cumberland Office
100N Mechanic Street
Cumberland, Maryland 21502
240-362-7040

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Joint Committees
Administrative, Executive,
and Legislative Review
Children, Youth, and Families
Program Open Space and Agricultural
Land Preservation

Williamsport Office
2N Conococheque Street
Williamsport Town Hall
Williamsport, Maryland

January 24, 2025

RE: Fire/EMS Coalition Support for SB164

Dear Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

The Fire/EMS Coalition would like to express their support for Senate Bill 164:

Terminology and Obsolete References – Maryland State Firefighters Association and Related Terms. This is a simple bill that will update the laws in Maryland to reflect the change in name of the Maryland State *Firemen's* Association to their current name the Maryland State *Firefighters* Association.

The Fire/EMS Coalition supports Senate Bill 164 in order to reflect the current name and status of MSFA throughout Maryland's laws.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike McKay".

Senator Mike McKay
Representing the Appalachia Region of Maryland
Serving Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties

Voting Organizations:

Maryland Fire Chief's Association (MFCA)
Maryland State Firefighter's Association (MSFA)
State Fire Marshal (OSFM)
Maryland Fire Rescue Institute (MFRI)
Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services System (MIEMMS)
Metro Fire Chief's Association
Professional Firefighters of Maryland

Our Mission Statement

The Maryland Fire/EMS Coalition unites Republicans and Democrats in support of fire/emergency services legislation that benefit all first responders. Becoming a member does not require taking positions on legislation; rather Coalition members are asked to offer support in a way that best benefits fire/emergency services in their respective Legislative Districts.

Testimony in support of SB0164 - Terminology and O

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

SB0164_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

02/06/2025

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON SB#/0164- POSITION: FAVORABLE

Terminology and Obsolete References - Maryland State Firefighters Association and Related Terms

TO: Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#/0164, **County Boards of Education - Antibias Training for Members - Terminology and Obsolete References - Maryland State Firefighters Association and Related Terms**

This is a common sense bill to ensure obsolete or outdated references and terms in documents used by our first responders is updated and corrected.

This bill is submitted to mandate replacing obsolete references to the Maryland State Firemen's Association with references to the Maryland State Firefighters Association; and replacing related terminology.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#/0164.

SB164 testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Robert Phillips

Position: FAV

MARYLAND STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

*Representing the Volunteer Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services Personnel
-a 501(c)3 Organization*



Legislative Committee

17 State Circle
Annapolis MD, 21401
Chair: Robert Phillips
Email: rfcchief48@gmail.com
Cell: 443-205-5030
Office: 410-974-2222

SB 164: Terminology and Obsolete References – Maryland State Firefighters Association and Related Terms

My name is Chief Robert Phillips, and I am the Legislative Committee Chair for the Maryland State Firefighters Association (MSFA)

I wish to present testimony in support of **Senate Bill 164: Terminology and Obsolete References – Maryland State Firefighters Association and Related Terms**

The MSFA is in support of this bill. This past summer after three attempts the Maryland State Firefighters Association (MSFA) changed its name from The Maryland State Firemens Association. With the change we asked Sen. Kagan to assist with the legislation to make the change through out all of Maryland legislature which she agreed to do. This bill just allows for this to happen and:

The MSFA asks that you return a FAVORABLE vote on SB164

Thank you and I would be glad to answer any questions you might have

Respectfully:

Robert Phillips

Testimony - MSFA.pdf

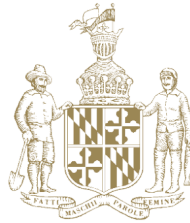
Uploaded by: Sen. Cheryl Kagan

Position: FAV

CHERYL C. KAGAN
Legislative District 17
Montgomery County

—
Vice Chair
Education, Energy, and
the Environment Committee

—
Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee
Joint Committee on Federal Relations



Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Suite 2 West
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3134
800-492-7122 Ext. 3134
Cheryl.Kagan@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SB164: MSFA Update

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Thursday, February 6, 2025 1:00 PM

Beginning in 1893, MSFA has referred to the Maryland State **FireMEN's** Association. Last year, the membership voted to officially change its name to the Maryland State **FireFIGHTERS** Association. This decision marks a significant step in recognizing the vital contributions of both women and men who serve as First Responders across our state.

However, our law books continue to refer to the organization by its former name. SB164 would simply update all instances in the Maryland Code to reflect the current and inclusive title, "Maryland State **FireFIGHTERS** Association."

While researching this bill, we identified other outdated, gendered terms such as "fireMEN" and "rescue squadMEN," which this bill would modify to encompass all of our First Responders. By adopting gender-neutral language, we ensure that anyone who risks their life to protect our communities is acknowledged with respect.

Updating these references is more than a matter of semantics. It is a necessary and overdue change.

I urge a favorable report on SB164.