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MAYOR

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SB0314

February 5, 2025

TO: Members of the Senate Finance and Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

RE: Senate Bill 314 - Certificates of Birth, Licenses, and Identification Cards - Sex Designation (Birth Certificate Modernization Act)

POSITION: Support

Chairs Beidle and Smith, Vice Chairs Hayes and Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committees, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) respectfully requests a **favorable** committee report on Senate Bill (SB) 314.

SB 314 would amend the process by which the Secretary of Health is required to create and issue a new certificate of birth. Under SB 314, an individual's parent, guardian, or legal representative would be able to request a birth certificate that lists a sex designation that differs from that of the original certificate without approval from a licensed health practitioner and without verifying that the individual has undergone surgical, hormonal, or other treatment. In addition, SB 314 de-genders language relating to parents on individuals' birth certificates and provides for additional opportunities by which a new birth certificate may be requested in the event that the legal name, marital status, and identification of one or both of the parents is made. SB 314 also adds the option to designate "Another" sex on licenses and identification cards in Maryland.

SB 314 is a forward-thinking bill that would bring Maryland law in line with the current scientific and social understanding of non-binary and transgender existence. By allowing individuals to align the sex on their birth certificate to their identity with reduced barriers, Maryland would improve the equity of gender non-conforming individuals within the state. This bill also provides practical advantages by reducing instances of gender discrimination based on legal identity that does not align with one's innate identity. Allowing individuals to more easily request identifying documents that align with their preferred identity also improves accessibility to necessary services, healthcare, and public accommodations that align with their gender identity.

Because of the above reasons, and in order to safeguard against federal threats to nonbinary and transgender Marylanders, The Baltimore City Administration respectfully requests a **favorable** committee report on Senate Bill 314.