

Bill SB 314

Birth Certificate Modernisation Act

Date of hearing: 02/05/2025

SUPPORT

Dear Chair Senator Pamela Beidle, Finance Committee, and Chair William C. Smith, Judicial Proceeding Committee,

My name is Cecile Taylor. I live in Anne Arundel County, and I am a retired School-Health-Registered Nurse. I am writing to indicate my strong **SUPPORT FOR SB 314**, the Birth Certificate Modernisation Act.

Having an X marker allows people the freedom to avoid traditional binary beliefs (beliefs which categorise all individuals as exclusively male or female) about gender if they so choose. The option shows that our County and State acknowledge and respect those who identify as binary, intersex, or gender non-conforming. Respect decreases violence.

Trans bigotry is dangerous. I know of a person who lives in Washington, DC, and who has been attacked several times because their clothing does not match who people think they are. This person feels outcast, depressed, unrecognised and excluded.

Exclusion has serious consequences on mental health, ability to be employed, go to the restaurant, the gym, and have a normal social life. Each of us must have the right to live undiscriminated and be recognised for whom we are without fear. Too many lives are lost by suicide because of this kind of discrimination (ref. "More trans teens attempted suicide after states passed anti-trans laws, a study shows" NPR, 09/26/2024).

Having a X marker on every legal document allows one to be employable. Two legal documents are usually required to be hired, to obtain health insurance, get a driver's license, get a social security card, get a passport, and obtain any document that requires two pieces of identification. Said two documents must match in name and gender. Unfortunately, in the US right now, that usually includes a birth certificate.

Not having matching documents with name and gender is discriminatory. Non binary people have the same rights to exist in our county as anybody else. Allowing them to have the X marker on their birth certificate is a recognition that they exist, are employable, and can live their life as anybody else.

The second part of the Birth modernisation Act requires one to provide a medical note from a health care provider which specifies the person's gender in order to obtain a birth certificate that matches their driving license, health insurance card, passport, or any other legal document. This is wrong:

1. The World Health Organisation and Cleveland Clinic, as well as other well known medical organisations, have concluded that being a non binary, trans, gay, lesbien, queer is not a medical condition (ref. [https://www.who.int/standards/classificationredefined gender, violence](https://www.who.int/standards/classificationredefined%20gender,%20violence)).

2. It is expensive:

-It requires one to set an appointment with a health care provider and pay a co-pay; health care providers frequently refuse to write letters acknowledging the gender denomination of a client. Many folks also do not have sick leave from their work..and remember, this is not a sickness. If their work does allow them sick leave, these people would rather use those few days of sick live for an actual medical ailment.

- Health care providers are not paid to write the letter. Insurance companies do not have a code to reimburse the provider. How can they justify the cost of their time without making a false claim?

- Many folks do not have money to pay a visit up front. Many LBGTQIA+ Marylanders face economic hardship. "While there are significant numbers of LGBTQ+ Marylanders at all income levels, they are more likely than their straight, cisgender counterparts to live on low incomes". According to Advent Health Care, a medical visit without health insurance in Maryland costs between \$150 and \$300(ref. <https://mdeconomy.org/we-can-do-more-to-support-marylands-500000-lgbtq-residents> ; <https://www.adventhealth.com/primary-care-plus/blog>).

For all those reasons, I am asking our Council Members to add to the bill SB 314 the marker X and to remove the obligation to provide a medical note to obtain a gender change on the birth certificate. Please support SB314.