



Bill No: SB314
Title: Certificates of Birth, Licenses, and Identification Cards - Sex Designation (Birth Certificate Modernization Act)
Committee: Finance
Hearing: February 5, 2025
Position: SUPPORT

The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) is a statewide coalition of women's groups and individuals formed to provide a non-partisan, independent voice for Maryland women and families. MLAW's purpose is to advocate for legislation affecting women and families. To accomplish this goal, MLAW creates an annual legislative agenda with issues voted on by MLAW members and endorsed by organizations and individuals from all over Maryland. **SB314 - Certificates of Birth, Licenses, and Identification Cards - Sex Designation (Birth Certificate Modernization Act)** is a priority on the [2025 MLAW Agenda](#) and we urge your support.

SB314 will update the process for changing one's personal name or sex designation on their own birth certificate or their child's birth certificate to align with other identification processes, promote dignity for all unique identities, and reduce opportunities for discrimination.

Currently there is no official process for changing the name or gender marker on your own birth certificate or your child's birth certificate in Maryland. In addition, our current system limits sex designation on a birth certificate to male or female and requires documentation from a physician to change it. While the Maryland ID and the U.S. passport have updated their processes to be more inclusive, the MD birth certificate lags behind which interrupts consistency among legal identification documents. This creates undue barriers for the trans and nonbinary community, including trans women, and prevents them from receiving official documents that affirm their current gender expression and identity. Consequently, members of these communities, and their children, are forcibly outed. Participating in common activities such as enrolling a child in school, traveling, or opening a bank account can expose individuals to discrimination and any consequences that may follow. We know that transgender and nonbinary folk are victimized at higher rates than their cisgendered counterparts. By having their identities haphazardly revealed trans/nonbinary folks and their families' risk violent encounters and dangerous repercussions.

The Birth Certificate Modernization Act will align the procedure for updating one's name or gender marker with the existing procedure for all other identification documents. Individuals will now be permitted to request a sex designation or name change under penalty of perjury rather than requiring a medical intervention. In addition, individuals will be provided three additional sex designations: nonbinary, other, or unspecified. This inclusion allows identity documents to better capture and validate the unique gender experience of all people. Lastly, this bill ensures that properly requested changes result in the creation of a new, rather than amended, birth certificate. An amended birth certificate still highlights the changes made which still infringes an individual's right to privacy and exposes them to prejudice. Dictating that these approved changes result in a new birth certificate is consistent with the ultimate goal of legislation—to provide all people, including transwomen, the right to dignity and privacy.

For these reasons, MLAW strongly urges the passage of SB314.

MLAW 2025 Supporting Organizations

The following organizations have signed on in support of our 2025 Legislative Agenda:

1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East
AAUW Anne Arundel County
AAUW Garrett Branch
AAUW Howard County
AAUW Kensington-Rockville Branch
AAUW Maryland
Anne Arundel County NOW
Bound for Better, advocates for Domestic Violence
Calvert County Democratic Womens' Club
Charles County Commission for Womrn
Child Justice, Inc.
City of College Park MD
Court Watch Montgomery
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority North Arundel County Alumnae Chapter
FinnCORE, Inc.
Frederick County Commission for Women
Interfaith Action for Human Rights
Kids for Saving Earth
Maryland Chapter, National Organization for Women
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence
Montgomery County, MD, NOW
National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc., Anne Arundel County Chapter
NCBWSOMD
ShareBaby, Inc.
Stella's Girls Incorporated
SUB&S LLC
The Rebuild, Overcome, and Rise (ROAR) Center of UMB
Trans Maryland
Unrooted Culture
Women of Honor International
Women's Equality Day Celebration across Maryland Coalition
Women's Equity Center and Action Network (WE CAN)
Women's Law Center of Maryland

*signed on as of 1/26/2025

Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women

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