



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 5, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

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

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (Department) respectfully submits this letter of support for Senate Bill (SB) 314 - Certificates of Birth, Licenses, and Identification Cards - Sex Designation (Birth Certificate Modernization Act), which supports the Moore-Miller administration's pursuit of an inclusive Maryland.

The purpose of this bill is to allow Marylanders to amend birth certificates without undue burden and to add a third sex designation option. Individuals can self-select "Unspecified or Another" in addition to male or female, which would display as "X" on the newly-issued certificate. The bill would require an individual to submit either a court order or an attestation under penalty of perjury to change the sex designation. It would further allow parents to update their child's birth certificates with their own current legal name. These changes align with Maryland Department of Transportation processes, and comport with other states' laws including the District of Columbia.

The Departments's Division of Vital Records (DVR) issues certified copies of birth, death, fetal death, and marriage certificates, as well as divorce verifications, to thousands of Marylanders annually. Vital records data is essential for public health reporting and tracking progress towards health goals. This bill helps to ensure that all Marylanders are represented in these vital documents.

Upon bill passage, DVR will update the fields on birth certificate applications and the Electronic Birth Registration System (EBRS), as well as internal procedures, by the bill's implementation date of October 1, 2025.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary