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SB164: MSFA Update

House Health and Government Operations Committee

Tuesday, March 18, 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While researching this bill, we identified other outdated, gendered terms such as "fireMEN" and "rescue squadMEN," which this bill would modify to encompass all of our First Responders.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.

This bill and its cross-file have each passed their chamber of origin unanimously.

I urge a favorable report on SB164.