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HB1368

Certificates of Birth, Licenses, and Identification Cards – Sex Designation (Birth Certificate Modernization Act)

**Health and Government Operations Committee Hearing
February 21, 2025**

Position: FAVORABLE

To the Honorable Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee:

[Community Legal Services](#) (CLS) is a nonprofit legal services provider dedicated to ensuring equitable access to justice and due process of law for Maryland's most under-represented populations. We strive to support, protect and advocate for the human rights of all individuals and families. We strongly support HB1368.

Maryland must step up to protect Marylanders whose rights and well-being are under attack at the federal level. This bill is an important step toward fulfilling this responsibility by protecting the rights, dignity, and wellbeing of nonbinary and transgender individuals in Maryland. Transgender and nonbinary individuals face significant barriers to full inclusion and equal treatment in society. One of the most critical issues is the mismatch between their legal documents—such as birth certificates, licenses and identification cards—and their gender identity. This bill helps address this issue by streamlining the process for changing gender markers and updating parents' names on the birth certificates of their children.

A birth certificate that does not reflect an individual's true gender or include the updated name of a parent on their child's birth certificate can create obstacles in numerous aspects of life, including healthcare, employment, and safety. Ensuring that nonbinary and transgender Marylanders may update their own and their children's birth certificates, their IDs and licenses to reflect their gender identity is not just enabling a legal change—it is also a vital affirmation of their right to self-determination and their right to define themselves. The provision in this bill which prohibits updated birth certificates from reflecting that they were reissued or amended is critical to preserve privacy and prevent discrimination when individuals use their updated birth certificate for identification or when applying for jobs, a passport, or other uses.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report in HB1368 to advance this important legislation.

Please feel free to reach out to Jessica Quincosa, Executive Director, or Lisa Sarro, Director of Litigation & Advocacy, with any questions at quincosa@clspgc.org, and sarro@clspgc.org, respectively.