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District 40

TESTIMONY in Favor of HB 1368 Certificates of Birth, Licenses, and Identification Cards - Sex Designation (Birth Certificate Modernization Act)

February 19, 2025

TO: Chair Peña-Melnyk; Delegates Martinez, Acevero, Cullison, Fair, Hill, Kaiser, Ruff, and Vogel; and members of the Health and Government Operations and Environment and Transportation Committee

Members of the Health and Government Operations and Environment and Transportation Committee, my name is Rebecca Abernathy, I live in Baltimore, Maryland, and I am writing to support HB 1368.

By voting in favor of this bill, you would be supporting the modernization of vital records and identification documents to better accommodate individuals whose gender identity does not align with traditional male or female categories.

Trans people around the world are subjected to frightening levels of violence and discrimination every day. The United Nation's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [explains that](#), "Trans persons are particularly vulnerable to human rights violations when their name and sex details in official documents do not match their gender identity or expression... That scenario creates a legal vacuum and a climate that tacitly fosters stigma and prejudice against them." And NIH research [shows that](#), "punitive national laws, policies and practices targeting transgender people, including complex procedures for changing identification documents, strip transgender people of their rights and limit access to justice. This results in gross violations of human rights on the part of state perpetrators and society at large."

In other words, failure to support this important bill would be to deny access to justice for, and to endanger the safety, wellbeing, and economic opportunities of, a vulnerable population of Maryland citizens.

I urge you to support HB 1368 and help ensure that Maryland's transgender citizens are protected, not victimized by, the laws of our state.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Abernathy