



**Maryland Commission
on LGBTQIA+ Affairs**

Bill Title: Certificates of Birth, Licenses, and Identification Cards - Sex Designation (Birth Certificate Modernization Act)

Bill Number(s): [HB1368/SB0314](#)

Position: FAVORABLE

Date: February 13, 2025

Submitted by: Jeremy Browning, Director of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

To:

House Health and Government Operations Committee

The Hon. Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair
The Hon. Bonnie Cullison, Vice Chair

Senate Finance Committee

The Hon. Pamela Beidle, Chair
The Hon. Antonio Hayes, Vice Chair

Testimony on behalf of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs:

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, created by the Maryland General Assembly, works to serve LGBTQIA+ Marylanders by galvanizing community voices, researching and addressing challenges, and advocating for policies that advance equity and inclusion. The Commission envisions a Maryland where all LGBTQIA+ people can live full and authentic lives. As a vital resource, the Commission collaborates with public officials, agencies, and community partners to ensure the rights and dignity of LGBTQIA+ Marylanders are protected and respected.

On behalf of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, we strongly support House Bill 1368/Senate Bill 314, the Birth Certificate Modernization Act. This bill is a top priority for the Commission and represents a crucial step toward ensuring dignity, equity, and inclusion for transgender, nonbinary, and intersex individuals in Maryland.

This bill addresses long-standing barriers by streamlining processes for amending sex designations on birth certificates, licenses, and identification cards. It removes medically unnecessary and burdensome requirements, such as proof of surgery or other medical interventions, that many individuals cannot access or do not want. Further, this documentation is time intensive for providers within an already-overburdened health system. By simplifying this

process, the bill affirms an individual's right to self-determine their identity, in alignment with best practices recommended by medical and advocacy organizations nationwide.

House Bill 1368/Senate Bill 314 also introduces an option to list "X" for sex designations, which is vital for Marylanders who do not identify within the traditional binary framework. This inclusion aligns with Maryland's commitment to equity and reflects the state's role as a leader in progressive, inclusive policy-making. Maryland would join 16 states and Washington, D.C. who allow residents to list "X" on their birth certificate.

Beyond the procedural benefits, this legislation sends a powerful message to LGBTQIA+ Marylanders, particularly parents and youth, that their identities are valid and that they belong in this state. The mental health and well-being of LGBTQIA+ individuals are directly impacted by the degree to which they feel seen, respected, and supported. Removing systemic barriers to accurate identity documents significantly reduces stress and stigma, fostering a safer and more equitable Maryland.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a favorable report for House Bill 1368 and Senate Bill 314.