

Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk (Chair)
Delegate Bonnie Cullison (Co-Chair)
Health and Government Operations Committee

Tracy Lamas
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Wednesday, February 19th, 2025

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

My name is Tracy. I am a public educator who has served countless of our nation's students for over a decade. I am also an advocate for LGBTQ communities. And lastly, while I was born and raised in California, I am proud beyond measure to be a Marylander today. I am proud to be a Marylander *because* of direct actions that support our diverse community, such as HB 1368, and I am writing to share my enthusiastic support for this bill.

In America, we are witnessing dangerous attacks against some of our most vulnerable citizens. Throughout my professional work and life, I have connected deeply with transgender people and have witnessed the challenges they experience in securing accurate government documents. Currently, Maryland imposes tremendous red tape for its citizens to update sex on birth certificates for themselves and/or for their children. I have seen these requirements delay my friends and students in getting proper documentation, which in turn has put them at longer risk of being outed in circumstances where birth certificates are necessary. In this terrifying climate, every delay a transgender person experiences in receiving care or proper documentation risks them being outed and, thus, puts them in potential danger.

Maryland would not be the first state to streamline this process for its constituents. New York, for example, no longer requires these additional documents to change birth certificates. As a designated sanctuary state for transgender people, we have the opportunity and responsibility to enact further positive change. I implore you to vote YES to enact HB 1368.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,
Tracy Lamas