

Bill: SB 626 ("Birth Certificate Modernization Act")

Position: Favorable

Committee: Finance

Hearing Date: 25 February 2026

Senator Lam, Chair Beidle, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Cathrine Schmid, and I am a resident of Baltimore and a constituent of District 41. I am writing to urge you to vote YES on SB 626.

Maryland is my home, but I was born in Michigan, the child of an Air Force servicemember. I am also transgender. On paper, I technically have the ability to change the sex marker on my Michigan birth certificate. In practice, that process means jumping through a series of hoops, paying fees, and, at the end, receiving a document that is still clearly stamped as "amended."

In an era of increasingly hostile rules and regulations targeting trans people, that "amended" label is not neutral. It is a flag on my record that invites extra scrutiny at exactly the moments when identity documents matter most: applying for jobs, dealing with bureaucracies, traveling, proving who I am and that I belong. Many of the new federal and state rules require "unamended" documentation, turning what should be a simple correction into a lifelong barrier.

I do not want my friends and neighbors here in my adopted home to have to navigate the same minefield. SB 626 cannot fix what Michigan does, or what the federal government requires, but it can make sure that Marylanders have access to accurate, up-to-date, and unmarked birth certificates that reflect who they are and who their families are without forcing them to out themselves or defend their existence every time they present their documents.

This bill is, at its heart, about making sure that ordinary Marylanders can live ordinary lives: parents who can prove they are their children's parents, citizens whose paperwork matches the name and gender they live every day, and young people who are not set up for a lifetime of explaining an asterisk on one of their most important documents. You have the power to spare your constituents from obstacles that people like me know all too well.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to vote YES on SB 626 and to move Maryland one step closer to being a place where all of us can be free of these unnecessary barriers.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,  
Cathrine Joy Schmid  
Baltimore, Maryland