



BILL NUMBER: SB 626

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

COMMITTEE: Finance

HEARING DATE: February 25, 2026

POSITION: Favorable

Reproductive Justice Maryland Action supports Senate Bill 626 in keeping with our mission to champion reproductive justice as a fundamental human right for all Marylanders. We believe that everyone deserves the freedom to make informed decisions about their bodies, health, and futures, free from discrimination, coercion, and barriers. This includes the freedom to live without regard to oppressive and harmful notions of gender.

Throughout history, human societies have had differing notions about the necessary attributes and roles ascribed to individuals based on whether they appear to be male or female. There have always been individuals who did not experience fitting neatly into the category they were assigned at birth. While they have always been with us, mainstream American society has only recently begun to recognize their existence, much less to acknowledge the harm of traditional ideas of gender and how these ideas constrain the lives of all people.

In this moment in particular, SB 626 represents an opportunity for Maryland to stand firm against the federal government's all-out assault on transgender rights. Since the first day of the new presidential administration, we have seen the federal government attempt to erase the very existence of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals. All references to transgender and gender non-conforming people have systemically been scrubbed from federal programs at every government agency. This has been done to communicate the administration's message of intolerance to transgender and gender non-conforming Americans. We can and must take the opposite stance in Maryland.

SB 626 contains several important provisions related to birth certificates. It will allow parents to have their identities reflected accurately on their children's birth certificates, thereby facilitating the exercise of their parental rights and responsibilities. It will also ensure that someone is not outed as transgender or gender non-conforming due to a notation on their birth certificate indicating it has been amended. The experience of being outed can result in anything from awkwardness to being murdered in a hate crime. Sadly, transgender and gender non-conforming people, especially those of color, face a high risk of physical and sexual violence.¹ Any legitimate public interest served in ensuring that an "amended" notation appears on someone's birth certificate does not outweigh the very real risk of harm that it could cause.

SB 626 will not solve the problem of the federal administration's outright hostility towards transgender and gender non-conforming people, but it is a meaningful step that Maryland can take in this crucial moment. Something as simple as having one's driver's license or identification card reflect their true identity can be a lifeline in these dark times for transgender and gender non-conforming Marylanders. Reproductive Justice Maryland Action is proud to support Senate Bill 626 and urges a favorable report.

¹ McLellan, Cortney, et al. "Global Burden of Violence against Transgender and Gender-Diverse Adults." *JAMA Network Open*, vol. 9, no. 1, 21 Jan. 2026, p. e2552953, jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2844133?utm_source=chatgpt.com, <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2025.52953>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2026.