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Health and Government Operations  
Committee

*Chair*

Health Occupations and  
Long-Term Care Subcommittee

*House Chair*

Joint Committee on Administrative,  
Executive, and Legislative Review



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Testimony of Delegate Samuel I Rosenberg

Before the Finance Committee

In Support of

**House Bill 939**

**Certificates of Birth - Filing - Time Period**

Chair Beidle and Members of the Committee:

House Bill 939, as amended, makes a very limited but important change to current law by allowing for an extension to the time to file a birth certificate from 5 calendar days to 10 calendar days if requested by the child's parent. The bill does not alter the substantive requirements for birth registration, the information that must be reported, or the responsibility of attending clinicians or institutions. It simply provides additional time to ensure accurate and full compliance with existing law.

Currently, births must be registered within 5 days. This is very manageable for hospitals with administrative staff and electronic access to vitals systems. For licensed midwives and other out-of-institution providers, who are often sole practitioners without direct electronic access, the five-day window can be difficult to meet while simultaneously providing essential postpartum care.

The bill also addresses a practical concern for Jewish communities. In Orthodox Jewish tradition, a male child is not formally named until the eighth day following birth and circumcision. The circumcision itself is part of the covenant between God, Abraham, and the future generations (See Genesis 17:9-14). As a result, families are frequently required to submit a birth certificate without a name and later initiate an amendment. This creates unnecessary administrative burdens for families and for the Maryland Department of Health. By providing for an extension to the filing period, if elected by the parents, the State can respect longstanding religious practice while improving administrative efficiency.

House Bill 939 is a straightforward, common-sense adjustment. It supports maternal health providers, respects religious practice, reduces duplicative administrative processes, and maintains the integrity of Maryland's birth registration system.

**For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on HB 939.**

March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026