

**Testimony in SUPPORT for SB0626  
Certificates of Birth, Licenses, and Identification Cards - Sex Designation (Birth Certificate  
Modernization Act)**

February 23rd, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Committee,

**We Are CASA strongly supports SB0626 - the Birth Certificate Modernization Act.** We Are CASA is one of Maryland's largest immigrant serving and advocacy organizations, working statewide to strengthen communities and improve the quality of life for working class, Black, Latino/a/e, Afro-descendant, Indigenous, and immigrant families. Through community organizing, direct services, and policy advocacy, We Are CASA partners with tens of thousands of Marylanders to remove barriers that limit dignity, inclusion, and economic security.

For the families We Are CASA serves, accurate identity documents are essential. Birth certificates are often required to access health care, enroll in school, secure employment and housing, obtain state identification or driver's licenses, open bank accounts, and travel. When these documents do not reflect a person's lived identity, individuals can face confusion, discrimination, and unnecessary harm. These barriers disproportionately impact low income, immigrant, and marginalized communities.

SB0626 modernizes Maryland law by updating the process for amending birth certificates. The bills allow individuals to update the sex designation on their birth certificate through a simple affirmation process, remove outdated medical requirements, and recognize gender markers beyond the binary. These changes reflect current best practices and align with policies already in place for state identification and driver's licenses.

For working-class and immigrant families who already navigate complex systems, language barriers, and fear of discrimination, this legislation reduces unnecessary obstacles. It creates a more respectful and efficient process that protects privacy and affirms the dignity of transgender and non-binary Marylanders.

By modernizing birth certificate laws, Maryland can improve consistency across state systems and promote fairness for all residents. For the communities We Are CASA serves, accurate documentation is often the gateway to safety, stability, and full participation in public life.

**For these reasons, We Are CASA respectfully urges a favorable report on SB0626 and HB1589, the Birth Certificate Modernization Act.**