

DANA JONES
Legislative District 30A
Anne Arundel County

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEM

Appropriations Committee

Subcommittees

Vice Chair, Health and Social Services

Oversight Committee on Pensions

Joint Committee on Administrative,
Executive, and Legislative Review

President, Women Legislators of Maryland



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Delegate Dana Jones
Before the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee**

**In Support of HB 1488
Constitutional Language - Modernization
March 10th 2025 1:00 PM**

For the record, I am Delegate Dana Jones, representing District 30A in the House of Delegates and I also have the honor of President of the Women's Caucus of Maryland.

Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee, I am here today to introduce HB 1488, Constitutional Language - Modernization. This legislation is straightforward, impactful, and timely.

Currently, Maryland is fortunate to have 4 out of 7 Executive Branch Constitutional Offices held by remarkable women: Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller, Comptroller Brooke Lierman, Secretary of State Susan Lee, and Adjutant General Major General Janeen Birkhead. These women are outstanding, capable leaders who serve Maryland with dedication and integrity. However, our state constitution still refers to these offices in a way that presumes the officeholders are male.

This constitutional amendment would modernize Maryland's Constitution by correcting this outdated language. Instead of using male pronouns such as "he," the language would remove the pronouns and refer to officeholders by their title. For example, rather than saying "he shall" in reference to the Comptroller, it would read "The Comptroller shall." This bill would similarly change other references that, by default, do not represent all Marylanders.

Nine other states have already made this change, including North Carolina and Utah.

It is important to me, as it is to all members of this Committee, that everyone feels empowered and inspired to serve their state through elected office. In the most recent election, Maryland elected three women to serve in the United States Congress. Additionally, 30% of our Senators and 45% of our Delegates are women. We are incredibly fortunate to have such diversity in our elected leadership. As children to adults learn and read the Maryland Constitution, it is essential that the language in our founding document reflects the reality that anyone can hold the office.

As you will see in your floor system, I am proud to have the support of Governor Moore, Comptroller Lierman, Attorney General Brown, Secretary of State Lee, and Adjutant General Birckhead.

With that, I respectfully urge a favorable report on HB 1488.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dana Jones" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Delegate Dana Jones