



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Support- SB 626
Certificates of Birth, Licenses, and Identification Cards - Sex Designation
(Birth Certificate Modernization Act)
Favorable with Amendment

TO: Chair Heather Bagnall, Vice-Chair Bonnie Cullison
and Members of the Health Committee.
FROM: Kari Alperovitz-Bichell, MD, MPH
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland Health Care
DATE: April 1, 2026

My name is Kari Alperovitz-Bichell, MD, MPH. I reside in Annapolis in District 30a. But, I am representing myself, as a physician and a person of faith. I am also representing the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland, a faith-based organization that advocates for legislation in Maryland that furthers Unitarian Universalist values. Our UU faith calls us to affirm the inherent worth and dignity of all people, so we promote legislation that recognizes every person's innate and inextinguishable value.

We urge you to support **SB 626 - The Birth Certificate Modernization Act.**

This bill has several functions that are vitally important, particularly to transgender Marylanders and their children.

This bill will enable transgender parents to prove they are related to their own children after they have been granted an order of legal name change through the Maryland Courts. Consequently, these children will have the protection afforded by having two legal parents.

This bill will also allow Transgender Marylanders to have a gender marker of "X" on their birth certificates. This is critical for intersex individuals (people born with a combination of male and female physical traits) as well as non-binary and gender-non-conforming individuals. The bill would allow our citizens to align their Maryland documents with their other documents, including current US passports and documents from other states. Note that X markers are allowed on US passports, and on documents issued by 16 other states plus the District of Columbia - although the Trump administration has recently suspended issuing any *new* passports with either a gender change or an X marker.

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The bill will ease the cost and logistical burdens of obtaining accurate and matching documents for the transgender community, which is also vitally important in many circumstances, including in obtaining employment and interacting with law enforcement, and it greatly protects against harassment. While this bill will benefit only a small percentage of Marylanders, it is crucial for those individuals. We cannot deny them this legal pathway simply because they do not make up a majority constituency. Their worth and dignity are equally deserving of protection.

Unfortunately, before they were able to pass it, the “Birth Information Amendment” was added that would require the state to create and permanently maintain a sealed “birth information history” that includes a person’s sex designation at birth and prior name. Even if sealed, this creates a government record that could expose sensitive personal information and put transgender people and others at risk. It undermines the very purpose of updating a birth certificate in the first place. Therefore, the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland urges you to remove the “Birth Information” Amendment and grant a Favorable Report on **SB 626**.

Respectfully submitted,
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Amendment: Remove the Birth Information Amendment