

**Testimony on SB0626**  
**Sex Designation on Certificates of Birth, Licenses, and Identification Cards and Birth**  
**Information Histories**  
**(Birth Certificate Modernization Act)**  
**FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

March 30, 2026

Delegate Heather Bagnall, Chair; Delegate Bonnie Cullison, Vice Chair; and esteemed members of the House Health Committee:

I am writing to ask you to vote favorably with amendments on Senate Bill 626. This bill would greatly improve Maryland's process for changing a gender marker on a birth certificate to be consistent with policies in other states across the country by allowing self-certification of sex designation, under penalty of perjury. At a time when rights of transgender individuals are under widespread attack, Maryland can take this important step to support transgender individuals in their daily lives.

The bill would align the update process for birth certificates with what has been in place since 2019 for Maryland driver's licenses and state IDs, allowing self-selection of gender in documents produced by the Motor Vehicle Administration and the State Board of Elections. For adults seeking to update birth certificates, it would lift burdensome paperwork obligations from medical and mental health providers, allowing for more time to treat patients. There would no longer be a need to produce medical documentation, such as proof of surgery or other medical interventions, that many individuals cannot access or do not want. Streamlining the update process would also make it easier for people to ensure consistency among their identity documents, which is essential given recent challenges relating to immigration and voting rights.

However, I oppose the amendments made to the original bill in the Senate requiring the Secretary of Health to "keep and maintain a birth information history for each individual for whom a certificate of birth is issued" and to maintain and update "birth information histories." *See* Senate Bill 626, p.2, lines 13-30. These provisions could present serious harm to the transgender community by creating a database that could readily identify people who have changed their gender markers on birth certificates. This information could be used for harassment, abuse, discrimination, and could result in a variety of other harms to these vulnerable individuals. I urge amendment of the bill to remove anything that authorizes collection—or could be utilized to make reports or lists—of people who have updated gender markers on their birth certificate.

Please help LGBTQIA+ individuals feel supported in their community by making it simpler for them to update their birth certificates, and decline to adopt provisions to create or maintain "birth information histories" for individuals who change their gender markers. For these reasons, please return a favorable report with amendments on SB0626.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Melinda Littell  
Arnold, D33C