

March 30, 2026

The Honorable Heather Bagnall
House Health Committee
240 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS of Senate Bill 626: Certificates of Birth, Licenses, and Identification Cards - Sex Designation (Birth Certificate Modernization Act)

To the Chair, Vice Chair, and esteemed members of the Health Committee,

My name is Cass Caveney and I am a longtime resident of Silver Spring, Maryland. In 2019, I applied for and received an updated Maryland driver's license with my correct X gender marker via self attestation, the same way other attributes like height, weight, and eye color are recorded. In the nearly seven years since, I have not once encountered any problems with my accurate ID and no one else I know who did the same has encountered any problems either.

I commend the Maryland General Assembly for passing HB 421 / SB 196 into law in 2019 via a bipartisan majority, materially improving the lives of Marylanders like myself. Now is the time to pass SB 626, the Birth Certificate Modernization Act, to extend the same successful framework to Maryland birth certificates. I testify in support of improving the lives of trans and nonbinary Marylanders like myself and reducing the workload of overburdened medical and mental health providers so they can focus on treating patients, not filling out paperwork.

Some have tried to make these changes sound unprecedented or scary, but they have already been enacted across the country and no actual problems have been cited in these states. Providing an option for X gender markers on birth certificates is a common sense policy implemented by California, Colorado, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Mexico, New Jersey, New York, Nevada, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, and Washington, thirteen of which also allow self-attestation.

The Senate bill must be amended, however, to remove the harmful amendment 323820/1 introduced by Senator McKay. This amendment is dangerous because it creates an unnecessary, de facto registry of trans people, requiring the state to keep a separate database of people who update their birth certificate, including "prior sex designation". Under current law, Maryland already maintains full birth certificate records. The creation of a new, separate database would serve no legitimate purpose and could only cause harm.

I ask the Health Committee to give SB 626 a favorable report with amendments as described above.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Cass Caveney