



**TESTIMONY FOR SB0581**  
**Action for Change of Name – Waiver of Publication Requirement**

**Bill Sponsor:** Senator Hettleman

**Committee:** Judicial Proceedings

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0581 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state with well over 30,000 members.

The requirement to publish a change of name has been around a long time. It came about for good reasons and served an important role in cases where someone sought to avoid creditors or misdeeds by changing their name.

However, that requirement does not at all serve when someone is trying to change their name because they need to change their gender. Often, these people are young and are not seeking to do harm to others by changing their name, but are merely trying to live their lives.

In these cases, the publication requirement does the opposite of what it was intended to do. It causes harm to the person who is changing their name. We cannot continue a practice that causes harm. It is not conscionable, especially in light of the intense suffering it causes.

Today, there is plenty of other information related to a person that will allow them to be tracked by creditors and by law enforcement. We no longer really need the publication requirement.

So, we need to rethink. We need to give each person who seeks to change their name the right to protect themselves from harm and avoid publication.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.