

Dear State of Maryland Legislators,

I am writing to submit testimony and to express my full, unequivocal support for the bills protecting gender-affirming care in Maryland, Bills: HB691 (and SB119). My family and I fully support legally protected healthcare and gender affirming treatment as outlined in HB691 (and SB119) and its protections:

- Shielding consumers, providers, and support individuals from extradition for gender-affirming care provided in Maryland.
- Prohibiting Maryland agencies and law enforcement from assisting with out-of-state investigations of gender-affirming care legally protected in Maryland.
- Prohibiting occupational boards from disciplining a licensed or certified individual over out-of-state complaints for gender-affirming care.

Gender affirming care is recognized as medically necessary healthcare by every major medical association, including the American Medical Association, American Psychiatric Association, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Our daughter is transgender. She came out in 7th grade and is now freshman in college. It is a known fact that nearly 40-50% of transgender individuals and anyone experiencing gender dysphoria is at risk of suicide or self-harm. Our daughter, too, has been at risk as a result of her gender dysphoria. The most important thing we can do as her parents is to support her, affirm her, and make sure she is in an accepting community that protects her rights.

A vital part of that support is gender affirming medical care which has allowed her to live and experience her gender identity. It has also significantly mitigated the risk of self-harm. As a result of this healthcare and other important affirmations, she has been a happier, thriving individual who adds value to all that she does in school, the community, and within our family. She is a bright, incredibly well-informed young woman who constantly uses her energy to work for justice.

Gender-affirming care has truly saved our daughter's life and allowed her to live her life as an accepted and valued member of the community. We want her and all individuals to have their rights protected when it comes to receiving medically necessary gender-affirming healthcare. We ask our state to provide this sanctuary to protect citizens of those states who are violating those people's rights with un-Constitutional and un-American bans on healthcare.

Thank you for your work to protect Maryland transgender individuals and those out-of-state individuals who seek gender affirming care in Maryland.

Barbara Ackerman

Timonium, MD

Maryland Legislative District: 42B