

TRANS MARYLAND



Trans Maryland
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House Bill #0691 Legally Protected Health Care – Gender–Affirming Treatment
Health and Government Operations Committee
February 21, 2024
Position: Support

Greetings Chair Peña Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, and the esteemed members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee. Trans Maryland is a multi-racial, multi-gender community power building organization for Maryland’s trans community. Trans Maryland runs the state’s largest name and gender marker change program, offering peer-to-peer guidance and financial assistance to Marylanders seeking a name and gender marker change. We also run the state’s largest peer to peer connection space for Trans Marylanders. We represent thousands of transgender Marylanders who have detailed the barriers they face in accessing affirming medical care. We urge the legislature to enact House Bill #0691, a technical fix to codify Governor Moore’s [executive order](#) clarifying that lifesaving gender affirming care is protected by last year’s Reproductive Health Act.

Gender affirming care is crucial life-saving care for the transgender Marylanders that Trans Maryland serves, recognized as medically necessary by every major U.S medical and mental health organization including the [American Medical Association](#). A recent [survey](#) of peer-reviewed scientific studies by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH), demonstrates hundreds of studies showing culminating in a recommendation that “health care systems should provide medically necessary gender affirming health care for transgender and gender diverse people” and that denying access to gender affirming care leads to [serious injury](#) and [death](#).

Yet in the past year, we at Trans Maryland have seen a sharp rise in new Marylanders seeking our services, Marylanders who were fleeing the now [twenty-two states](#) that have banned at least some manner of gender affirming care. Most striking, we have seen many new transgender Marylanders from Florida, which last year banned gender affirming care, not just for youth, but also [80% of transgender adults](#) there.

The Reproductive Health Act protects gender affirming care, but the wording is vague. While Governor Moore’s [executive order](#) clarifies that the vague text in the Reproductive Health Act protects gender affirming care, that vagueness could be used against transgender Marylanders as more Americans flee to become Marylanders as these attacks on transgender rights worsen in the coming years.

Maryland needs to enact House Bill #0691, this simple technical fix to the Reproductive Health Act, to ensure transgender Marylanders have the full protections of their government from outside states that are [actively attempting to impose their discriminatory laws](#) on transgender Marylanders, laws which threaten our very lives. It is time for the law to be crystal clear for transgender Marylanders, Maryland is a safe space for them. For these reasons, **we urge a favorable report on this Bill # HB 0691.**

For more information, contact Lee Blinder, Executive Director of Trans Maryland at lee@transmaryland.org