



Senate Bill 119 / House Bill 691
Legally Protected Health Care – Gender–Affirming Treatment
Position: **FAV**

To Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jessica Friedman, MD, MPH. I am a resident of District 43A. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB119/HB691, Legally Protected Healthcare - Gender-Affirming Treatment, which would add gender-affirming care to the definition of legally protected healthcare in Maryland.

As a family physician at a Federally Qualified Health Center in Baltimore, I provide medically necessary gender-affirming medical care to approximately 150 adults from across the state of Maryland. In 2023, the General Assembly signaled its support for this care by enacting the Trans Health Equity Act, and it recognized clinicians' autonomy and professional expertise by passing the Reproduction Health Protection Act. I am grateful to practice in a state in which I feel that my patients' lives and my professional practice are valued.

I take care of adults whose friends and family members do not support gender-affirming medical care. Some have threatened me with civil and administrative actions, and while I know that my workplace supports the care that I provide, such threats can cause me to worry about my livelihood, my family's wellbeing, and my ability to continue practicing medicine. In order to continue practicing medicine in Maryland, I need to know that I am protected from out-of-state criminal and civil litigation. **I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB119/HB691.**

In Unity,

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