

**House Bill 691**  
**Legally Protected Health Care - Gender-Affirming Treatment**  
**February 21, 2024**  
**Support**

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee,

My name is Mike English, I am a resident of District 20 and live in downtown Silver Spring. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB691, Legally Protected Healthcare - Gender-Affirming Treatment, which would add gender-affirming care to the definition of legally protected healthcare in Maryland.

I support this bill for both personal and broader values based reasons. Without getting heavily into stories that aren't mine to tell, someone very important to me is trans, and I've seen how much good the treatment she has received has done for her, and just how life changing it can be.

Maryland has recently been asserting itself as a leader in providing gender affirming care and enshrining protections to the transgender/non-binary community in law. That is wonderful and welcome for people fortunate enough to live in Maryland, but I don't think I need to tell you that other states are less progressive on this matter, and in fact punish those seeking vital care elsewhere. We need this law as a common sense, but vital, extension of the same step we take for reproductive health. We know people will come here for care, and we need to make sure that they, and those that assist them in getting needed care, as well as care providers, are protected from legal repercussions.

Not everyone is lucky enough to live in Maryland, we have a moral obligation to help them too. This bill will help us meet that challenge, not to mention it will protect Maryland doctors and other providers from legal and financial threats to their operations.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB691.**

**Thank you,**  
Mike English  
Silver Spring



