



**To:** House Health and Government Operations Committee  
**Bill:** HB 691 – Legally Protected Health Care - Gender-Affirming Treatment  
**Date:** February 21, 2024  
**Position:** Favorable

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Moveable Feast strongly supports *House Bill 691 – Legally Protected Health Care - Gender-Affirming Treatment*. This legislation expands Maryland’s reproductive health shielding law to include gender affirming care.

Moveable Feast’s mission is centered on health equity. We provide medically tailored meals to improve the health outcomes of people with serious chronic or life-threatening disease. Our organization began in the 1980’s by serving people with HIV at a time when they were marginalized by the health care system. While we have made progress in advancing equality and equity for the LGBTQ+ community, there have been alarming setbacks with the recent wave of state legislation to ban gender affirming care, particularly for minors.

The research is clear. Gender affirming care saves the lives of transgender and nonbinary youth by reducing their risk of suicide by almost 75%.<sup>i</sup> However, twenty-two states have put the lives of transgender and nonbinary youths at risk by banning gender affirming care, including our neighboring state of West Virginia.<sup>ii</sup> These states are taking further steps to intimidate parents from seeking gender affirming care for their children in nearby states. Please vote favorably on House Bill 691 as quickly as possible. We need to make sure that Maryland remains a safe state all people. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net).

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<sup>i</sup> Tordoff DM, Wanta JW, Collin A, Stepney C, Inwards-Breland DJ, Ahrens K. Mental Health Outcomes in Transgender and Nonbinary Youths Receiving Gender-Affirming Care. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2022;5(2):e220978. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.0978

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.hrc.org/resources/attacks-on-gender-affirming-care-by-state-map>