



**Committee:** House Health and Government Operations Committee

**Bill:** HB 691 – Legally Protected Health Care - Gender-Affirming Treatment

**Hearing Date:** February 21, 2024

**Position:** Support

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The Maryland Assembly on School-Based Health Care supports *House Bill 691 – Legally Protected Health Care - Gender-Affirming Treatment*. This bill would recognize gender affirming care as legally protected care.

Twenty-two states have banned gender-affirming care for minors. We are concerned about the impact of these bans on Maryland families. Recently, the Attorney General of Texas has sought the records of out-of-state patients from at least two gender affirming care providers in Georgia and Washington.<sup>i</sup> These kinds of requests can have a chilling effect on providers and may impact their decision to provide gender affirming care to any patients, including Maryland patients.

We want Maryland families to be able to seek gender affirming care in their own state. Research clearly demonstrates that gender affirming care can be life-saving, as it reduces suicide ideation by 73%.<sup>ii</sup> We ask for a favorable report. 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> <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/02/09/texas-abortion-transgender-care-outside-state-borders/>

<sup>ii</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