

**House Bill 691**  
**Legally Protected Health Care - Gender-Affirming Treatment**  
**February 20, 2024**  
**Support**

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

My name is Ericka McDonald and I'm a resident of District 44B in Catonsville, Maryland. I'm submitting this testimony to strongly urge the Senate to support SB 119 - Legally Protected Healthcare - Gender-Affirming Treatment.

Gender-affirming care is recognized medically-necessary healthcare, supported by all major medical organizations. As the parent of a college-age transgender child I have seen the difference that gender affirming care makes. **Access to gender affirming medication and surgery saved my child's life.** I have no doubt that without this care he would not be well or able to prosper.

There is an assault on the rights of transgender people in the United States. This bill would protect people who receive gender-affirming care, as well as medical professionals who provide this life-saving care. Eleven other states and the District of Columbia have enacted these protections.

My son is fortunate to be able to attain gender-affirming care in Maryland, but he now lives in a country where he can not safely live, study, work, or even visit many states. As a parent, it is terrifying to see these fear-based, uninformed attacks on this vulnerable community. SB 119 would ensure that my child is able to attain medical care necessary for his well being, without the threat of persecution.

I urge you on behalf of my family to support SB 119 and continue to make Maryland a safe place for all people.