



**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 Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) strongly supports *House Bill 691 – Legally Protected Health Care - Gender-Affirming Treatment*. This legislation would extend Maryland’s reproductive health shielding law to gender affirming care.

Twenty-two states have banned gender-affirming care for minors. We are deeply concerned about the impact on the mental health of youth in those states. For transgender and nonbinary youth, gender affirming care reduces the rate of depression by 60% and suicide ideation by 73%.<sup>i</sup> This legislation is urgently needed to protect people who come to Maryland for gender-affirming care, their families, and their Maryland providers.

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> 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