



TESTIMONY TO THE ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE

SB 682 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Gender-Affirming Treatment (Trans Health Equity Act of 2022)

POSITION: Support

BY: Nancy Soreng - LWVMD President

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The League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) supports Senate Bill 682: Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Gender-Affirming Treatment (Trans Health Equity Act of 2022). The bill requires Maryland Medicaid to provide medically necessary gender-affirming care, using nondiscriminatory and current standards. It would affirm the rights of transgender Marylanders who face discrimination in receiving medically necessary care.

The League of Women Voters believes in social justice and the health and safety of transgender Americans. The League's *Health Care Policy* states that ***affordable access to a basic level of quality care should be provided for all U.S. residents.*** The league advocates for health care that is equally accessible and affordable to all.

Maryland currently denies medically necessary care to trans patients. Without this care, Marylanders face job and housing discrimination, harassment, and interpersonal violence.

The **Trans Health Equity Act of 2022** is important because it prevents state officials from interfering with the patient-physician relationship. Current medical care can be denied without regard to an individual's needs. It also ensures that gender-affirming care reaches two spirit, nonbinary, intersex, and other gender diverse individuals.

The rising costs of discrimination are paid by Marylanders through emergency room visits, hospitalizations, and mental health care. Maryland is falling behind other states that permit doctors to provide individualized care.

The League, representing 1500+ concerned citizens throughout Maryland, urges the committee to give a favorable report to Senate Bill 682.