

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

Position: Support

March 24, 2022

House Health and Government Operations Committee

Bill Summary:

SB 682 would require, beginning January 1, 2023, Medicaid to cover medically necessary gender-affirming treatment(s) in a nondiscriminatory manner and in accordance with current standards.

Position:

For many transgender individuals, access to gender-affirming health care is intimately related to well-being across a range of activities of daily living. Transgender individuals who cannot access the health care they need, because of poverty, insurance exclusions, or other discrimination, have high unemployment rates and experience health disparities that include frequent depression, drug abuse, HIV, and other conditions that are expensive to treat. Transgender individuals are nearly nine times more likely than the general population to attempt suicide.

Eighteen states and the District of Columbia have chosen to specifically include coverage for gender-affirming care under their Medicaid programs. Gender-affirming care includes a range of services, such as surgical procedures, hormone therapy, mental health counseling, and voice modifications.

Recent research has shown when the costs of untreated gender dysphoria are factored in, medically necessary care for transgender people is cost-effective. The value of the health benefits associated transitioning far outweigh the costs of covering the cost of the gender-affirming treatment(s).

For these reasons, we urge a ***favorable*** report on SB 682.