

Testimony in Support of HB 746
Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Gender-Affirming Treatment
Trans Health Equity Act of 2022
Health and Government Operations Committee
March 2, 2022

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Chair Pendergrass and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the chance to testify in support of House Bill 746.

I believe that HB 746 is an important necessity to serve the needs of a highly vulnerable population susceptible to discrimination. As a non-binary individual, not only I, but other individuals like me would benefit from the changes this addendum would address.

I've watched countless individuals who've struggled with their gender identity for years, leave abusive households to begin their medical transition journey, all to be denied coverage for their transition needs. Friends of mine have resorted to sourcing hormones from unconventional sources, in a "D.I.Y." approach just to avoid coverage gaps in care while waiting on insurance approval. I've watched friends individually pluck every single hair out of their face with tweezers because electrolysis wasn't covered, only to be left with ingrown hairs and scarring that have worsened their confidence and led to an even larger decline in mental health.

I've had to call 911 for friends that have tried to end their life because they couldn't get coverage for medically necessary transition services, because living in the wrong body was too much to bear.

I have also been impacted by the gaps in care that MD Medicaid has given me. I have a special hormonal compound that is costly. Because MD Medicaid refuses to cover it, I have to pay a balance of \$60 a month for a prescription that would cost me \$1 or \$3. I've had to miss doses of this medication because I couldn't afford it.

This bill would finally address the antiquated guidelines, and allow my friends and I the treatment we need and deserve.

End with a call to action!

Please do what you can to support this community/fix this issue.

I strongly urge you to support HB 746.

Thank you for your consideration,

Gayla Dunphy

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