

Testimony in Support of SB 682
Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Gender-Affirming Treatment
Trans Health Equity Act of 2022
House Health and Government Operations Committee
March 24, 2022

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Chair Pendergrass and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the chance to provide written testimony in support of Senate Bill 682.

I believe that SB 682 is important because it expands access to gender affirming care under Maryland Medicaid. Gender affirming care is something that is personal to me because I suffer from gender dysphoria and therefore, have been dependent upon hormone replacement therapy and surgeries to help alleviate this condition that there is no cure for. Unfortunately, Maryland Medicaid still does not cover all of the surgeries and procedures necessary for one to be able to completely treat dysphoria. This pertains to facial gender affirmation surgery (FGAS) and electrolysis for me in particular. While I am grateful to have been able to have gender reassignment surgery and breast augmentation covered under Maryland Medicaid, there is still my facial dysphoria to account for, which was brought on by a male puberty I didn't want to have to go through. Maryland is lagging behind when it comes to transition coverage and it is time it catches up, especially if it is going to call itself a blue state.

If I were able to obtain facial feminization surgery (FFS) and other transgender people were able to access the electrolysis I am thankful to no longer need through insurance coverage, the world would be a much better place in Maryland for transgender people. We could really start feeling most comfortable in our own skin, for when we aren't made to wear masks these days, the face is the main thing people see of one another. It is important, therefore, for our faces to be in line with our gender identities and, for transgender women specifically, to not have facial hair to account for. I, for one, would not have to worry about going out in public and being looked at funny or harassed because I would have more of a chance of passing as a cisgender woman through facial surgical intervention. I would simultaneously be more comfortable in my own skin.

Please do what you can to support the transgender community and fix this issue. We did not ask to be born this way and it has been a painstaking life as a result. The least the state of Maryland could do is account for its mishandling of us over the years by going all in and not just half way in. We deserve better treatment and we are not asking for too much here, when many other states are already covering the procedures mentioned above. This isn't a privilege. It is a right. Please support SB 682.

Thank you for your consideration,

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