

Testimony in Support of SB 682
Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Gender-Affirming Treatment
Trans Health Equity Act of 2022
Health and Government Operations Committee
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Chair Pendergrass and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 682.

My name is Sergio Lizama, and I am a board-certified internal medicine physician with advanced training in endocrinology and for the past 7 years I have been caring for the transgender community in Maryland.

The transgender community faces daily discrimination or refusal of care from their providers, are uninsured at a higher rate than their cisgender counterparts, and if insured, experience denials of coverage from insurance companies. Not to mention the disproportionate rates of violence on the basis of their gender identity.

While Medicaid has been covering gender affirming care in Maryland since 2015, the coverage is limited and outdated. Often not following evidence-based practices or updated standards of care. There are around 22,000 transgender adults living in Maryland and only about 1% of them are enrolled in Medicaid. Some of these adults are my patients and I know they struggle accessing some of these proposed services causing distress, depression, and sometimes also attempting against their own lives. This one percent of beneficiaries deserves these proposed services. My patients deserve these services to achieve goals of continuity of care and positive health outcomes across the life course.

Chair and Members. Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to support SB 682 and give our transgender Maryland community the opportunity to access the healthcare they deserve.

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