

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 22, 2022

Michele Levy
Baltimore City/D43

Chair Pendergrass and Members of the Committee,

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

More times than I can count, I have had the joy of celebrating and supporting transgender and gender non-conforming members of my community undergoing gender affirming medical treatment. These procedures have not been easy. Recovery is often grueling, challenging, and protracted. But these procedures have, in many instances, quite literally saved their lives.

Maryland has long recognized the insufficiencies in the federal Medicaid program. I am proud to live in a state whose Medicaid expansion has sought to provide critical healthcare to a broader swath of residents. Currently, Maryland is relying on 20-year old guidelines for the needs of Maryland's trans community, which is devastatingly outdated and puts us far beyond states like Virginia, Washington, D.C., and others offering more robust and relevant care.

Approximately 2,000 transgender Marylanders are enrolled in Medicaid. SB682 is a critical and cost-effective measure; services are federally reimbursable, and will only be used by a nominal percentage of Maryland's population. But beyond the financial impact, this bill would provide essential, life-saving care to low-income Marylanders on Medicaid. The ability to live authentically, and to access medically necessary care, should not be limited to those with private insurance.

I strongly urge you to demonstrate your support for healthcare as a basic human right and vote in favor of SB 682.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michele Levy
3140 Remington Ave.
Baltimore, MD 21211