
BILL NO.: House Bill 283
TITLE: Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Gender–Affirming Treatment (Trans Health Equity Act)
COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations
DATE: February 14, 2023
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

House Bill 283 aims to address rampant health outcome disparities within the Maryland Transgender communities by updating the Maryland Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid) and requiring it to cover medically necessary gender-affirming care. The Women's Law Center of Maryland supports HB 283 as it is a matter of equity and basic human dignity.

For over fifty years the Women's Law Center has been a leading voice in the fight for women's rights and gender equity. When we say women, that always includes transgender women, because transgender women are women. And as women, we all deserve the same access to physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy. Thus, the struggle for trans rights must be an integral part of our continued fight against systems of oppression. In short, our feminism must be intersectional if it is to succeed.

Regarding health care, in particular, it is a well-documented fact that marginalized communities experience widespread discrimination in health care settings. This is particularly acute for transgender communities and comes at great cost to the over 20,000 transgender Marylanders. Due to discriminatory and antiquated structures, transgender and gender non-conforming people must navigate a health care system that was not designed to support their unique medical needs, which in turn leaves many transgender individuals vulnerable to both physical and mental health complications. These gaps in our health care system lead to serious consequences and put the lives and health of transgender individuals at risk. HB283 would bridge those gaps and create meaningful access to critical health care services.

As such, the Women's Law Center of Maryland urges a favorable report on HB 283.

The Women's Law Center of Maryland is a private, non-profit, legal services organization that serves as a leading voice for justice and fairness for women. It advocates for the rights of women through legal assistance to individuals and strategic initiatives to achieve systemic change, working to ensure physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy for women in Maryland.