



Trans Health Equity Act of 2023
Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Gender-Affirming Treatment
Position: Favorable with Sponsor Amendments

Chair Peña-Melnyk and Members of the Health & Government Operations Committee,

My name is Claudia Martinez. I am a [TITLE] at Whitman Walker, and a member of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East. We are the largest healthcare workers union in the country, with over 10,000 members in Maryland and Washington DC. Our union supports HB283 – the Trans Health Equity Act, and we urge the Committee to issue a **favorable** report, including **sponsor amendments**. This legislation will allow low-income transgender patients to access lifesaving, medically necessary gender affirming healthcare.

Access to gender affirming healthcare (GAC) for transgender patients is life changing for the better. Too many trans people end up dead when we are not living our authentic life as the gender we truly are. There are very high rates of depression and suicide, as well as being the targets of violence, in the transgender community – this is made even worse when transgender people can't afford GAC. Passing HB283 can help prevent these hardships. It will literally save lives.

I support Delegate Anne Kaiser's amendment to require consent from healthcare providers to have our names listed on a public directory of providers who specialize in gender-affirming healthcare, rather than mandating all providers be listed as the current bill draft requires. I urge the Committee to adopt this amendment as it is important for the safety of healthcare workers.

Transgender people are taxpayers too, so we deserve to get the healthcare we need through Medicaid that we help pay for. We demand to be treated with dignity and respect. Please vote **YES** on this life saving legislation to expand access to healthcare for transgender Marylanders.

In Unity,

Claudia Martinez
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