



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 Rachel Renee Smith I am a Behavioral Health Therapist 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.

HB 283 is important because it will increase safety, health, and wellness for transgender people who rely on these health insurances, especially transgender feminine people of color who are more likely to suffer the effects of discrimination and negative social determinants of health outcomes due to lack of access to medically necessary health care. This bill will open access to so many who have otherwise been suffering. Many of the patients I work with have been negatively impacted by the absence of the equity that this bill is offering to bring.

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.

Please vote **YES** on this life saving legislation to expand access to healthcare for transgender Marylanders.

In Unity,

Rachel Renee Smith
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