

**Senate Bill 460 Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Gender-Affirming Treatment Trans Health Equity Act February 28, 2023**

**Support**

*Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Finance Committee,*

My name is Bonnie Kingsley Smith. I am a resident of District 43B. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB0460, the Trans Health Equity Act, which would expand Maryland Medicaid to cover lifesaving gender-affirming care.

As a 65-year-old male-to-female transgender person I find day to day presenting as my female self a critical part of my emotional wellbeing. I have spent a considerable amount of money clearing my facial hair through electrolysis. This is a long and painful process that I endure to be passable as my true self in public. My grey beard does not work with the more economical laser hair removal. Electrolysis is not an “elective” procedure with me. The only option I have *is* electrolysis.

The cost of electrolysis has been a heavy financial drain on my savings. I urge you to pass SB0460 to help alleviate some of the financial anxiety I endure. Electrolysis is already painful enough without depleting my savings in the process!

*I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB0460.*