



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 460**

**Trans Health Equity Act**

Before the Senate Finance Committee

By Stephanie Klapper, Deputy Director Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative, Inc.

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Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 460. Special thank you to Senator Mary Washington for being the lead sponsor for the bill. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of our individual organization, Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative, Inc., as we have not reviewed this legislation with the full Maryland Health Care for All! Coalition. Our mission is to ensure that all Marylanders have access to quality affordable health care coverage. This bill ensures that the Maryland Medical Assistance Program will provide gender-affirming treatment in a nondiscriminatory manner. Currently Marylanders with private health coverage through Maryland Health Connection are able to access gender transition care that Marylanders enrolled in Medicaid cannot. The vulnerability of this community means this gap in services results in other health inequities based on the social determinants of health for trans Marylanders. Gender-affirming care has been shown to dramatically increase mental health and wellbeing, and multiple major medical associations support comprehensive care for the trans community including the American Medical Association and American Academy of Pediatrics. I urge the Committee to pass SB 460.