

Senate Finance Committee

Senate Bill 460: Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Gender-Affirming Treatment – Trans Health Equity Act

February 28, 2023

*****Support*****

The National Association of Social Workers represents social workers across the State of Maryland. We are urging your support for *Senate Bill 460 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Gender-Affirming Treatment (Trans Health Equity Act)* which will enable gender-affirming medical care provided free of discriminatory practices.

Modernizing Maryland Medicaid’s coverage of gender-affirming treatment to reflect current best practices is long overdue. By extending necessary care to our trans, non-binary, and gender nonconforming community we can make access to health care for all Marylanders more fair and equitable.

Transgender individuals unable to access the healthcare they need are at high risk for depression and other behavioral health maladies, and data reveals a suicide rate nine times the general population. The benefits and economic savings associated with gender affirming care far outweigh the long-term costs of untreated gender dysphoria.

Maryland is home to over 22,000 individuals who identify as transgender. We ask for a favorable report to assure access to Medicaid coverage for gender-affirming care, and reduce the human devastation of unmet medical needs.

For these reasons, we ask for a *favorable* report for Senate Bill 460.

Judith Schagrin, LCSW-C
Co-Chairperson, Legislative Committee