



**HB283: Trans Health Equity Act of 2023  
Position: Favorable with Sponsor Amendments**

My name is Alexa Rodriguez, I am the Director of Trans Latinx DMV. Our mission is to advocate for the needs that specifically affect the Trans-Latinx community and strategize ways to improve the community's quality of life in our region. I'm also a member of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers E, the largest healthcare workers union in the country, with over 10,000 members in Maryland/DC. I support the Trans Health Equity Act, and we urge the Committee to issue a **favorable** report, **including sponsor amendments**. This bill will allow low-income transgender patients to access lifesaving, medically necessary gender affirming healthcare (GAC).

**I'm a transgender patient and a provider of gender affirming healthcare. As a provider I see a lot of people like me- people living with HIV, trans folks who are immigrants and many of them undocumented – struggling to access GAC that is medically necessary and ultimately life-saving. I hear so many stories from trans patients who can't afford GAC that break my heart. As a trans care provider, I know how to treat my community because I am part of that community – so I can confidently say from personal and professional experience that GAC is medically necessary.**

**Many trans women who have not received GAC have so called "masculine" features like a strong forehead that present in our faces, so people tend to see us as different, which puts us at risk of discrimination and violence. Trans people, especially Black & Brown transgender women, are disproportionately targets of violent attacks at the hands of people who hate us simply because we are transgender. When we are able to get GAC, we are less "noticeably trans" to people who seek to harm us, so GAC allows us to move through the world more safely.**

**I medically transitioned when I was 25 years old. Because I didn't have access to hormone treatments when I was younger, I developed "masculine" features, so I needed GAC to live as my true self. Adults like me who transition later in life often need GAC for feminization of the forehead or jawline, hair removal, voice training and more. When I first started working at Whitman Walker and I was working with trans patients from Virginia. Virginia didn't have GAC like what I and my patients needed classified as a medical necessity. A year ago, Virginia changed their policy and now GAC is covered by Medicaid. Since then, I have seen the health and well-being of my transgender patients from Virginia improve drastically. I want my transgender patients who live in Maryland to have that same access to care and a better life. If Virginia can do this, so can (and should) Maryland!**

I support Delegate Anne Kaiser's amendment to require consent from healthcare providers to have our names listed on a public directory. This amendment as it is important for the safety of healthcare workers. Please vote **YES** on this life saving legislation and amendment to expand access to healthcare for transgender Marylanders.

In Unity,  
Alexa Rodriguez