



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

Chair Peña-Melnyk and Members of the Health & Government Operations Committee,

My name is Dr. Andrea Speedie, I am a Family Medicine Physician at Chase Brexton Health Care, 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 essential to the work that we do as physicians for our transgender patients. It will codify the care that we currently provide and assure a peace of mind to a group who faces sometimes life-threatening vulnerabilities within the public and private sphere. And at this time, a vulnerability that extends to their basic right of access to healthcare. As a legislature you can provide this peace of mind that assures people that their lives are valuable, that the care that they receive is valued, respected and guaranteed.

I don't feel that it is necessary for legislatures to understand the care that we give, to understand how providing for someone's mental and physical health, offering them a pathway to reconciling their identities, can save their lives. I think it is necessary that you to trust us. We are the same people you trust with your needs, your children's, your parents'. Trust that the care we provide to transgender people is critical to their wellbeing and long-term health outcomes and that the decisions we make, like all healthcare decisions, are best made between the provider and patient.

I'm afraid that I cannot give you one patient's story because I am overwhelmed the the lives of the thousands of patients we serve. But please know that this is some of the most impactful work I do as a Family Physician and I thank you for ensuring I can continue to do it.

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 helps to ensure accuracy in the listing and is important for the safety of healthcare workers and their families. Please vote **YES** on this life saving legislation to expand access to healthcare for transgender Marylanders.

In Unity,

Andrea Speedie, MD, speedieandrea@gmail.com