



Trans Health Equity Act of 2023  
Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Gender-Affirming Treatment  
**Position: Favorable with Sponsor Amendments**

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

My name is Jessica Friedman, I am a Family Physician at Chase Brexton Health Care in Baltimore, MD, 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.

**I provide gender affirming hormone therapy to transgender and gender diverse adults with gender dysphoria at Chase Brexton. Gender dysphoria is a medical diagnosis that describes the distress someone experiences related to the mismatch between their biological sex and their gender identity. For many of my patients, the hormones and surgeries already covered by Maryland Medicaid address their gender dysphoria. However, I have patients whose primary sources of distress are their facial features, hair growth patterns, or voice pitch; there are medical therapies and procedures available to address these issues for patients with commercial insurance, however my patients with Medicaid are unable to afford and access them. These treatments and therapies are not cosmetic, but rather a necessary part of providing gender affirming medical care. It is inequitable and unjust that low-income Marylanders cannot access them, and the Trans Health Equity act will remedy this.**

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 is important for the safety of healthcare workers. Please vote YES on this life saving legislation to expand access to healthcare for transgender Marylanders.

In Unity,  
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