

## Montgomery County Federation of Republican Women

March 28, 2023

The Honorable Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk  
And Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee  
Maryland House  
Annapolis, Maryland

Dear Chairman and Members,

RE: **SB460 — Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Gender–Affirming Treatment (Trans Health Equity Act) —STRONGLY OPPOSE**

The **Montgomery County Federation of Republican Women** which includes 400 members oppose this bill and at a bare minimum, we want to be assured that SB460 would not permit Medicaid coverage for children under the age of 18. It appears that Medicaid in Maryland currently doesn't cover gender affirming treatment for children, however, **we are concerned this bill might open the door for children. So at a minimum, we request an amendment to affirm that this bill is only for adults who are at a minimum age of 18.**

We oppose this bill for these reasons and hope you will drop your support for this bill:

**It will add considerably to taxpayer costs:** The fiscal notes state there would be an indeterminate but **likely significant amount of state expenditures**, especially if fertility preservation procedures are provided.

**Fertility Preservation Procedures for one particular group are discriminatory:** Would the fertility preservation services be provided only to transgenders and not to biological females who are not transgender? This would be discriminatory against women because Medicaid does not allow this service for any reason according to the fiscal notes.

**The bill allows for cosmetic procedures and is highly discriminatory:** Cosmetic services are not allowed for any reason by Medicaid, so if you pass this bill, would it mean that only transgenders would be allowed to have these services and not men and women who are not transgender? If you would permit this for one group and not another, isn't that discriminatory? For example, does facial feminization or masculinization surgery mean plastic surgery? Why should taxpayers pay for these cosmetic procedures? What about hair alteration? Does this mean that transexual women would be covered for hair plugs? Again, why should taxpayers pay for something cosmetic especially when males, who are not transgender can't get hair transplants under Medicaid. What about voice lessons-does that include singing lessons too? Your support for this bill for people with a mental illness (one of many mental

illnesses) of gender dysphoria, is permitting our tax dollars to cover things that those who identify as biological men and women (and some who have other mental illnesses) can't get for free. I thought you gave an oath to defend the Maryland Constitution? If so, then why are you supporting a discriminatory bill?

**The regret percentage is not accurate:** If you are so sure about the effectiveness of gender affirming care, then why did you add a provision to cover reversal of care? The agony of going through a transformation of body and hormones and then having regret and going through a reversal is a tortuous experience for any human being. This is especially a reason that we want to make sure that no child will be eligible for gender affirming care under Medicaid. The fiscal notes say that about 1% regret the surgery. An NIH paper is likely where the MDH retrieved this statistic but, the same paper also states: "there is high subjectivity in the assessment of regret and lack of standardized questionnaires, which highlight the importance of developing validated questionnaires in this population." It also says: "further studies should be conducted to assess types of regret as well as association with different types of surgical procedure." (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8099405/> ) NIH also stated in another paper that 41% of transgender persons in the US attempt suicide at least once in their life. ( <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5178031/> ). If so many attempt suicide, then we question the effectiveness of gender affirming surgery.

For all of these reasons, **we ask you to drop this bill from consideration.**

Sincerely,  
Laurie Halverson, President  
Montgomery County Federation of Republican Women  
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