

Testimony in Support of HB 283
Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Gender-Affirming Treatment
Trans Health Equity Act of 2023
Health and Government Operations Committee
February 14, 2023

Kyle Rosen
District 46
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine Student

Chair Peña-Melnyk and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the chance to testify in support of House Bill 283. My name is Kyle Rosen. I am a resident of District 46. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB 283, the Trans Health Equity Act, which would expand Maryland Medicaid to cover lifesaving gender-affirming care.

The Trans Health Equity Act (THEA) addresses a critical gap in the healthcare of transgender Marylanders by ensuring Medicaid coverage for gender-affirming healthcare. Currently, Maryland Medicaid excludes many gender-affirming procedures. There is consensus in the medical community that these procedures are medically necessary and reduce suicide, abuse, discrimination, and harassment. THEA is a low-cost solution that improves the quality of life of trans Marylanders, brings Maryland Medicaid into compliance with federal law, and meets current medical standards.

I believe that HB 283 is important because receipt of gender-affirming care, including puberty blockers and gender-affirming hormones, was associated with 60% lower odds of moderate or severe depression and 73% lower odds of suicidality over a 12-month follow-up study (Tordoff et al. Mental Health Outcomes in Transgender and Nonbinary Youths Receiving Gender-Affirming Care. JAMA Netw Open. 2022;5(2). doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.0978).

Additionally, reducing discrimination against TGD people is a cost saving measure. Without gender-affirming care, transgender people are more likely to be “outed.” 24% of trans Marylanders are evicted or denied housing because they are transgender, and nationwide are 4 times more likely to be victims of violent crime.

For a variety of reasons, I strongly urge you to support of HB 283.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kyle Rosen
25 N Patterson Park Ave
Baltimore, MD 21231

The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect the policies or positions of Johns Hopkins University and Medicine, although I am pleased to note that Johns Hopkins does officially support this legislation.