



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND**

**KATE STEWART**  
COUNCILMEMBER  
DISTRICT 4

**HB 283/ SB 460 – Trans Health Equity Act**  
**Testimony of Kate Stewart, Montgomery County Council District 4**  
**Position: SUPPORT**  
**February 2023**

My name is Kate Stewart and I serve as the Montgomery County Councilmember for District 4. Today I write in support of the Trans Health Equity Act (SB 460, and HB 283). I will note Montgomery County Council has voted to officially support this legislation, however today I am testifying as an individual and a proud parent.

As an elected official, I fully support this bill. It will bring Maryland into compliance with federal legal guidelines by ensuring Maryland Medicaid offers comprehensive healthcare coverage to the transgender community, based on internationally recognized, best medical practices.

This bill not only addresses significant health inequities faced by Maryland's transgender and non-gender conforming community, it is fiscally responsible. Maryland's transgender community makes up only 0.5 % of the state's population. Only around 6,000 transgender Marylanders are enrolled in Medicaid. This is low cost, high impact legislation that will dramatically increase mental wellbeing, reduce suicidality, and save lives. These services are federally reimbursable and cost only 0.005% of our Medicaid budget.

As a mom, I know first-hand the need to ensure access to this life-saving care and the impact to a young person's mental and physical health when care is denied or delayed. Transgender people, especially our youth, are much more likely to experience both long-term physical and mental health complications without gender-affirming care. That is why the American Academy of Pediatrics supports gender-affirming care.

Our role as elected officials is to remove barriers to health care, and given the rise of anti-trans legislation around the country, we have an even greater responsibility at this time in Maryland to ensure income does not determine access to life-saving care.