

**House Bill 283 Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Gender-Affirming Treatment Trans
Health Equity Act February 14, 2023**

Support

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk, Vice Chair Kelly, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee,

My name is Bonnie Kingsley Smith. I am a resident of District 43B. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB283, the Trans Health Equity Act, which would expand Maryland Medicaid to cover lifesaving gender-affirming care.

As a 65-year-old male-to-female transgender person I find day to day presenting as my female self a critical part of my emotional wellbeing. I have spent a considerable amount of money clearing my facial hair through electrolysis. This is a long and painful process that I endure to be passable as my true self in public. My grey beard does not work with the more economical laser hair removal. Electrolysis is not an “elective” procedure with me. The only option I have *is* electrolysis.

The cost of electrolysis has been a heavy financial drain on my savings. I urge you to pass HB0238 to help alleviate some of the financial anxiety I endure. Electrolysis is already painful enough without depleting my savings in the process!

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB283.