

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

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Chair Peña-Melnyk and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the chance to testify in support of House Bill 283. My name is Olivia Febles Simeon. I am a resident of District 45. 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 as a future doctor I want to be able to provide the best care possible to all my patient, without the barrier of cost interfering in the care of my future transgender patients. Care to ALL people is a universal human right, and I strongly support this initiative and the unmeasurable benefits it will have on transgender care, specially of those patients coming from low resource settings. I believe that thanks to this bill, Maryland will not just help reduce the mental health issues of transgender individuals unable to access care but that it will also save costs from reduced long-term physical and mental health complications.

Please do what you can to support this community/fix this issue.

Thank you for your consideration,

Olivia Febles Simeon
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