



Date: February 15, 2024

To: The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair

From: Aliyah N. Horton, FASAE, CAE, Executive Director, MPhA, 240-688-7808

Cc: Members, Senate Finance Committee

Re: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT – SB 119 – Legally Protected Health Care – Gender - Affirming Treatment

The Maryland Pharmacists Association (MPhA) urges a favorable report for **SB 119 – Legally Protected Health Care – Gender -Affirming Treatment.**

The bill does not specifically call out pharmacists, however with dispensing medications, pharmacists are involved in the care continuum, as such MPhA supports the legislation.

As we reviewed the bill, we do not have concerns with the proposed new language rather a clarification on current law.

Amendment – Amend page 4, line 18 to modify the definition of gender-affirming treatment by removing “any medically necessary.”

Rationale: 'Gender-affirming treatment' is any treatment consistent with current clinical standards of care prescribed by a licensed health care provider for the treatment of a condition related to the individual's gender identity.

We are concerned that maintaining *medically necessary* can leave an opening for opposition to the merits of the necessity of a given treatment rather than focusing on protecting any treatment that is supported by standards of care and evidence-based guidelines.

Treatments supported by standards of care are backed by evidence with a goal to support the physical and mental wellbeing of those receiving that care. Our goal is to safeguard treatments that will reduce suicidality, improve psychiatric wellbeing, and reduce overall morbidity and mortality of patients seeking gender-affirming treatments.

MARYLAND PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION - Founded in 1882, MPhA is the only state-wide professional society representing all practicing pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and student pharmacists in Maryland. Our mission is to strengthen the profession of pharmacy, advocate for all Maryland pharmacists and promote excellence in pharmacy practice.