



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 119  
Legally Protected Health Care - Gender-Affirming Treatment  
Before the Senate Finance Committee  
By Ruby Young, Intern, Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative  
February 15, 2024**

Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 119 on behalf of Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative, a nonprofit advocacy organization with a mission to ensure access to quality, affordable health care. Special thank you to Senator Lam for sponsoring this legislation. We strongly support SB 119 to protect gender-affirming care and establish Maryland as a safe haven for transgender people. As it stands now, gender-affirming care is not included in the definition of "legally protected healthcare." Twenty-two states so far have enacted bans on gender affirming care.<sup>1</sup> Our neighbors, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia, have either banned or proposed bans on gender affirming care. SB 119 would make Maryland a safe-haven by ensuring that access to gender affirming care is protected from out-of-state litigation, as eleven states and the District of Columbia have already done. With SB 119 Maryland can become a more equitable and inclusive state. We strongly urge a favorable report on SB 119 and thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.hrc.org/resources/attacks-on-gender-affirming-care-by-state-map>