



Senate Bill 119 / House Bill 691
Legally Protected Health Care – Gender–Affirming Treatment
Position: FAV

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Gwen Umbach. I'm a Bilingual Paralegal at a community-based health center, and a member of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East. I support SB119/HB691 because I know this bill will protect our healthcare providers and give patients more access to gender-affirming care.

In my job I often take calls from clients asking how they can access gender-affirming care. I remember one particularly difficult phone call I took right after Florida passed a law restricting trans healthcare. The person explained to me that they live in Florida but were originally from Maryland and looking to move back because it was getting too difficult to be trans in Florida. They had been receiving hormones through a local clinic, but the new law threw the legality of that treatment into question. The clinic had sent the patient a message saying that due to the new law, they were stopping all gender-affirming care immediately and would not offer any other services until they had gotten confirmation they wouldn't be prosecuted for it. The patient was surprised, devastated, and didn't know where to turn. This patient lost access to gender-affirming care not because there was no clinic to help them, but because the clinic feared prosecution.

The bill you are considering would protect doctors and patients alike and prevent this situation from happening to others in the future. I urge a **favorable** report SB119/HB691.

In Unity,

Gwen Umbach

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