



# Trans Healthcare Maryland

*because you shouldn't have to know more than your doctor.*

Mail Address: Trans Healthcare MD, 16501 Shady Grove Road #7742, Gaithersburg, MD

## **SUPPORT HB 1010**

March 4, 2020

### **Health Care Facilities – Discrimination (LGBTQ Senior Bill of Rights) HB 1010**

Greetings esteemed members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. My name is Lee Blinder, my pronouns are they/them, and I am the executive director and founder of Trans Healthcare MD and also a transgender Marylander myself. Transgender (binary and nonbinary) seniors are some of Maryland's most vulnerable community members. Our membership consists of 35 transgender Marylanders above 55 years old, and we know they are have deep concerns about aging in place or in a facility due to anti-transgender bias. Transgender seniors are especially vulnerable due to anti-transgender bias, ageism, and more. When transgender seniors share their transgender identity, we know they face particular barriers in being affirmed, safe, housed, and employed.

According to the National Transgender Discrimination Survey 70% of transgender adults age 65 and older reported having delayed gender transition to avoid discrimination in employment. This has a chilling impact on the wellness of our elder transgender community. As noted in Sage USA's Improving Lives of Transgender Older Adults Policy Brief, the University of Washington Aging and Health Report of 2011 noted that "one third of transgender elders between 50-95 years old reported being in poor physical health, and that 22 percent of transgender respondents needed to see a doctor but lacked the funds to do so."

Examples like these are commonplace and mean that we have a duty to ensure that our most vulnerable Marylanders are affirmed and able to be themselves in their elder years. Lack of affirmation for identity is strongly correlated with negative health outcomes, and we have a duty to ensure our elders are protected in healthcare. I hope to be an LGBTQ+ senior myself one day, and thus codifying protections like these for my elders now also ensures me a safer place in my elder years. There are still many misunderstandings about the transgender community, and protections like these are necessary for that reason as well as for the dignity of our elders.

Thank you to the committee for your time and attention to this crucial legislation. We would be happy to provide additional information or assist the committee in any way. We hope the committee will provide a favorable report for HB 1010.



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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lee Blinder".

Lee Blinder  
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March 4, 2020