

Testimony Concerning HB 1010
“Health Care Facilities – Discrimination (LGBTQ Senior Bill of Rights)”
Submitted to The House Health and Government Operations Committee
March 5, 2020

Position: Support

Dear Health and Government Operations Committee,

My name is Roya Tavakolian and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Frank J. Oldham Jr. :

Mr. Oldham described a recent experience with discrimination in a dentistry setting. He was asked about his HIV status and when stating his status was HIV positive, the dentist refused to touch him and provide him with care. After this experience, Mr. Oldham felt stigmatized and an immense pressure not to disclose his HIV status at dental facilities in order to obtain the care he needs. He believes this highlights the importance of educational training for all healthcare workers to provide quality inclusive care that is non-discriminatory. Mr. Oldham also stated that fortunately, his hospital visits have not felt discriminatory because the staff and providers he interacted with had clearly been trained and received cultural education on how to treat and ask questions with the LGBTQ and/or HIV positive population to make him feel comfortable. Mr. Oldham also stated he has many friends who are gay and HIV positive and would rather tell health care providers that they got HIV through IV drug usage than homosexual intercourse because they fear further discrimination based on their sexuality. They feel it is unsafe for them to reveal their sexual history and orientation because of the stigma and treatment they would receive after disclosing that information. In conclusion, there is a strong need for cultural competence training around the LGBTQ and HIV positive communities to promote inclusive, quality health care and put an end to discrimination.

I urge you to support House Bill 1010 to protect LGBTQ seniors from discrimination.

Thank you for your consideration.

Frank J. Oldham Jr.