



BETH ISRAEL DEACONESS  
MEDICAL CENTER

A member of CAREGROUP



A major teaching hospital  
of Harvard Medical School

July 8, 2011

The Honorable Cynthia Creem  
The Honorable Eugene O'Flaherty  
Joint Committee on the Judiciary  
The State House  
Boston, MA 02133

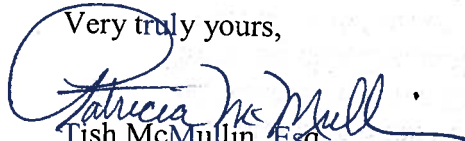
Dear Chairwoman Creem, Chairman O'Flaherty, and esteemed members of the  
Committee,

Enclosed please find testimony from Eric Buehrens, Interim President & CEO of Beth  
Israel Deaconess Medical Center, in support of House Bill 502 and Senate Bill 764,  
Relative to Transgender Equal Rights.

Please do not hesitate to call on us if you have additional questions or if we may be of  
assistance to you in any way.

Thank you very much for your consideration of the attached.

Very truly yours,

  
Tish McMullin, Esq.

cc: The Honorable Gale Candaras  
The Honorable Patricia Jehlen  
The Honorable Thomas McGee  
The Honorable John Keenan  
The Honorable Richard Ross  
The Honorable Christopher Speranzo  
The Honorable Colleen Garry  
The Honorable Kevin Murphy  
The Honorable Sean Curran  
The Honorable John Fernandes  
The Honorable Angelo Puppolo, Jr.  
The Honorable Carlos Henriquez  
The Honorable Christopher Markey  
The Honorable Daniel Winslow  
The Honorable Shelia Harrington  
The Honorable Sonia Chang-Diaz  
The Honorable Benjamin Downing  
The Honorable Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.  
The Honorable Byron Rushing

Testimony in Support of House Bill 502 and Senate Bill 764  
Eric Buehrens  
Interim President & CEO  
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center  
July 8, 2011

Dear Chairman O'Flaherty, Chairwoman Creem and esteemed members of the Committee:

I am writing to express my support for HB 502/ SB 764, An Act Relative to Gender-Based Discrimination and Hate Crimes, which clarifies and makes explicit in our Commonwealth's antidiscrimination and hate crime laws that persons are entitled to equal protection under the law regardless of their gender identity or expression.

As Interim President and CEO of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC), every day I am proud of our legacy and ongoing commitment to meeting the health care needs of diverse, underserved populations. At BIDMC, we have a covenant to care for the underserved and to work to change disparities in outcomes and access to care. Indeed, we have a strong history of serving patients who have faced tremendously difficulty in accessing and utilizing our health care delivery system, and in this inclusive spirit, I ask for your support for this legislation.

In 1916, decades before merging with the Deaconess hospital, Beth Israel Hospital was established by the Boston Jewish community to meet the needs of a growing immigrant population. Since that time, BIDMC has committed needed resources and established itself as a leading hospital in providing culturally appropriate care for residents of the Commonwealth who have faced racial, ethnic, cultural, language, gender, sexual orientation, age and other barriers in accessing needed health care and treatment. Today, we strive to serve our patients compassionately and effectively, as we would like our family members to be treated when care is needed in either the community or tertiary setting. Further, we honor and celebrate the diversity of our workforce, and recently held our 18<sup>th</sup> Annual LGBT Achievement Awards and PRIDE celebration in which the entire BIDMC community honored this year's award recipients.

The Commonwealth, similarly, has a long tradition of pioneering antidiscrimination laws, including civil rights violations against perpetrators of hate crimes, and was among the first states in our nation to pass an antidiscrimination law. This created a strong foundation for many amendments over the years, but we have more work to do. Regrettably, transgender persons have been subjected to discrimination and even violence on the basis of their gender identity or expression. The legislation before you today will make clear that these victims of discrimination and violence are protected under our antidiscrimination and hate crime laws, and Massachusetts will join the many states that have already amended their laws to extend these protections.

I thank you for your attention to this important issue, and urge your favorable report of HB 502 and SB 764.\*