



**Committee:** House Health and Government Operations Committee

**Bill:** HB 722 – Health – Minors – Gender and Sex Transition Procedures

**Hearing Date:** February 21, 2024

**Position:** Oppose

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The Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland (LCPCM) opposes *House Bill 711 - Health – Minors – Gender and Sex Transition Procedures*. This legislation makes it a criminal misdemeanor, with a minimum of 1 year imprisonment, for a health care provider to provide gender-affirming hormone therapy or gender-affirming surgery to a minor without parental consent.

This bill is not about establishing parental consent requirements, as Maryland law already requires parental consent for any of the gender affirming care services in this bill. Instead, this bill is designed to intimidate health care providers with criminal penalties. If enacted, some health care practitioners, including licensed clinical professional counselors, might stop providing any services to transgender and nonbinary youth because of the fear of criminal prosecution. This would have a disastrous effect on access to care for needed services.

We ask for a unfavorable report. Health care providers should be able to provide the best care for their patients, which may include gender-affirming care, without the risk of going to prison. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net).