



**Maryland Commission
on LGBTQIA+ Affairs**

Bill Title: Health Occupations - Cross-Sex Hormone Therapy for Minors - Prohibition (Harm the Kids Act)

Bill Number(s): [HB1399](#)

Position: UNFAVORABLE

Date: March 5, 2025

Submitted by: Jeremy Browning, Director of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

To:

House Health and Government Operations Committee

The Hon. Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair
The Hon. Bonnie Cullison, Vice Chair

Testimony on behalf of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs:

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, created by the Maryland General Assembly, works to serve LGBTQIA+ Marylanders by galvanizing community voices, researching and addressing challenges, and advocating for policies that advance equity and inclusion. The Commission envisions a Maryland where all LGBTQIA+ people can live full and authentic lives. As a vital resource, the Commission collaborates with public officials, agencies, and community partners to ensure the rights and dignity of LGBTQIA+ Marylanders are protected and respected.

The Commission strongly opposes House Bill 1399, which seeks to criminalize medically necessary and potentially life-saving hormone therapy to minors. This bill contradicts the overwhelming consensus of major medical organizations, including the American Medical Association (AMA), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Psychiatric Association (APA), and the Endocrine Society, all of which recognize gender-affirming care as evidence-based, essential healthcare.

HB1399 is harmful and medically unsound. Numerous reputable sources support the assertion that gender-affirming hormone therapy reduces suicidality, depression, and anxiety among transgender youth including the following:

- [The Journal of the American Medical Association \(JAMA\)](#): A 2022 study found that transgender and nonbinary youth who received gender-affirming hormone therapy experienced significant reductions in depression and suicidality over a 12-month period.

- [The New England Journal of Medicine \(NEJM\)](#): A 2023 study found that access to gender-affirming hormone therapy led to significant improvements in anxiety, depression, and self-esteem among transgender adolescents over a two-year period.
- [American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\)](#): Policy Statement strongly supports gender-affirming care, stating that denying transgender youth access to appropriate medical care increases mental health risks, including depression and suicidal ideation.
- [Trevor Project 2022 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health](#): Transgender and nonbinary youth who received gender-affirming medical care found that pubertal suppression is associated with decreased depressive symptoms and those who received hormone treatment demonstrated positive effects on body image and overall psychological well-being as well as reduced suicidality.
- [Endocrine Society - Clinical Practice Guidelines](#): The Endocrine Society's guidelines emphasize that gender-affirming hormone therapy is a medically necessary treatment for gender dysphoria and improves psychological functioning and overall well-being in transgender youth.

HB1399 incorrectly categorizes gender-affirming care as treatment for a "mental health diagnosis associated with gender nonconformity" rather than acknowledging that gender dysphoria is a well-established medical condition recognized by the [DSM-5 and ICD-11](#). The decision to pursue gender-affirming care is made after thorough evaluation by medical and mental health professionals, in collaboration with parents and guardians, ensuring that minors receive safe and individualized treatment.

HB1399 undermines parental rights and physician expertise. The bill interferes with the ability of parents to make informed medical decisions for their children, despite research affirming that supportive families and access to gender-affirming care significantly improve long-term health outcomes. It criminalizes doctors for following established best practices in medicine and places providers at risk of severe penalties, including life imprisonment, for delivering care aligned with medical guidelines.

HB1399 is an extreme and dangerous bill that disregards medical science, threatens the well-being of transgender youth, criminalizes healthcare providers, and strips parents of their ability to make informed healthcare decisions for their children. Maryland has long been a leader in protecting LGBTQIA+ rights, and this bill represents a direct attack on those principles.

For these reasons, the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs strongly urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report on HB1399.

Resources:

American Psychiatric Association. (n.d.). What is Gender Dysphoria? Retrieved from <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/gender-dysphoria/what-is-gender-dysphoria>

Chen, D., Hidalgo, M. A., Leibowitz, S., Leininger, J., Simons, L., Finlayson, C., ... & Olson, J. (2023). Psychosocial Functioning in Transgender Youth after 2 Years of Hormones. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 388(3), 240-250. <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2206297>

Hembree, W. C., Cohen-Kettenis, P. T., Gooren, L., Hannema, S. E., Meyer, W. J., Murad, M. H., Rosenthal, S. M., Safer, J. D., Tangpricha, V., & T'Sjoen, G. G. (2017). Endocrine Treatment of Gender-Dysphoric/Gender-Incongruent Persons: An Endocrine Society Clinical Practice Guideline. *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*, 102(11), 3869–3903. <https://academic.oup.com/jcem/article/102/11/3869/4157558>

Rafferty, J., Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health, Committee on Adolescence, & Section on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health and Wellness. (2018). Ensuring Comprehensive Care and Support for Transgender and Gender-Diverse Children and Adolescents. *Pediatrics*, 142(4), e20182162. <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/142/4/e20182162/37381/Ensuring-Comprehensive-Care-and-Support-for>

The Trevor Project. (2020). Gender-Affirming Care for Youth. Retrieved from <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/gender-affirming-care-for-youth/>

Tordoff, D. M., Wanta, J. W., & Collin, A. (2022). Mental Health Outcomes in Transgender and Nonbinary Youths Receiving Gender-Affirming Care. *JAMA Network Open*, 5(2), e220978. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2789423>