
TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HOUSE BILL 1399

Health Occupations - Cross-Sex Hormone Therapy for Minors - Prohibition

Health and Government Operations Committee

March 11, 2025

Social Work Advocates for Social Change strongly opposes HB 1399, which would prohibit providing gender-affirming hormone therapy (HRT) for minors and charge providers who prescribe HRT to minors with a felony subject to imprisonment not exceeding life. We urge the committee to consider the profoundly harmful, well-documented impact this legislation would have on transgender youth, their families, and the professional care community that supports them.

The decision to initiate gender-affirming hormone therapy for adolescents is not made lightly. It is a process grounded in evidence-based medical practices, extensive clinical experience, and the informed consent of both the adolescent and their family under the guidance of experienced healthcare providers¹. Thirty leading U.S. medical organizations have made public statements supporting access to gender-affirming care for minors.² HB 1399 undermines this careful, individualized, and medically supported approach in favor of one that is rooted in the so-called moral opposition of transgender youth's right to self-actualize and actively puts their health and safety at risk by denying them life-saving healthcare.

Withholding gender-affirming hormone therapy from adolescents can result in severe and lasting harm. Adolescents with gender dysphoria who are denied access to appropriate medical treatment experience increased levels of depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation³. Further, 90 percent of transgender adults who wanted but did not receive puberty blockers when they were younger reported contemplating suicide.⁴ This not only negatively affects the adolescent's mental health, but also places a significant burden on families and caregivers who are trying to support their child through a highly challenging period. HB 1399 would disproportionately harm vulnerable transgender children who are already struggling with the complex intersection of their gender identity, societal expectations, and the pressures of adolescence.

¹ World Professional Association for Transgender Health. *Standards of Care for the Health of Transgender and Gender Diverse People, Version 8*. PubMed, 2022, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36238954/>.

² A4TE's Trans Health Project. *Medical Organization Statements*, 2024, <https://transhealthproject.org/resources/medical-organization-statements/>

³ Maung, Htet Htet. "Gender Affirming Hormone Treatment for Trans Adolescents: A Four Principles Analysis." *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2024, pp. 345-363. *PubMed Central*, <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11289353/>. Accessed 6 Mar. 2025.

⁴ Turban, J. L., King, D., Carswell, J. M., & Keuroghlian, A. S. (2020). *Pubertal Suppression for Transgender Youth and Risk of Suicidal Ideation*. *Pediatrics*, 145(2), e20191725. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2019-1725>



**Social Work Advocates
for Social Change**

For more information, please contact

August Page

umswasc@gmail.com

Gender-affirming hormone treatment is grounded in ethical principles that prioritize the well-being and autonomy of transgender adolescents. These practices are not only supported by medical consensus but are vital for improving mental health outcomes, reducing suicidality, and enhancing quality of life for transgender youth. Politicians, driven by ideology rather than medical evidence, should not be allowed to intervene in this deeply personal aspect of healthcare, especially when such decisions should remain in the hands of medical professionals and the patients themselves. **We should not allow political opinion to override individual self-determination and evidence-based practices that are proven to improve outcomes for transgender youth. We must not favor opinion over evidence - and put at further risk the health and well-being of transgender adolescents and those who support them.**

Social Work Advocates for Social Change urges an unfavorable report on HB 1399.

Social Work Advocates for Social Change is a coalition of MSW students at the University of Maryland School of Social Work that seeks to promote equity and justice through public policy, and to engage the communities impacted by public policy in the policymaking process.