

Shelby Vaughn

Ellicott City, MD
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Testimony in Opposition of HB1399

Maryland House of Representatives
Health and Government Operations
Maryland General Assembly

Chair Delegate Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee

My name is Shelby, and I am submitting this testimony to express my opposition for HB1399.

This bill, like many others of its nature, is not routed in evidenced based medicine (the standard for medical treatment), but rather in transphobic rhetoric. Medical decisions for all patients, especially pediatric patients require a thorough review of the literature with the goal of doing no harm. When evaluating safety, we must look at both physical and psychological safety. There are no significant long-term adverse outcomes reported at this time. The psychological benefits of puberty blockers are well-documented and is associated with reduced risk of suicidal ideation and improved mental health outcomes including reduced incidence of anxiety and depression. (1) In fact every single reputable medical and psychological association have established that gender affirming care is the gold standard.

I have personally seen the benefit of gender affirming care in my lived experiences including improved mental health and reduced suicidal ideation. I do not have the words to express the change in joy and peace I have seen when people are given the opportunity to transition and live comfortably in their own skin.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to vote **NO**. I am happy to answer any questions or provide additional information if needed.

Sincerely,
Shelby Vaughn

References

1. *Efficacy and Safety of Gonadotropin-Releasing Hormone Agonist Treatment to Suppress Puberty in Gender Dysphoric Adolescents*. **Sebastian E Schagen, Peggy T Cohen-Kettenis, Henriette A Delemarre-van de Waal, Sabine E Hannema**. 7, s.l. : Journal of Sexual Medicine, 2016, Vol. 13.