

OPPOSE HB 1399

Health Occupations - Cross-Sex Hormone Therapy for Minors - Prohibition (the so called “Protect the Kids Act”)

This bill seeks to prohibit a licensed health care practitioner from prescribing, dispensing, or administering a cross-sex hormone or otherwise providing cross-sex hormone therapy for the treatment of certain mental health diagnoses to an individual who is a minor.

From: Abbie Ellicott

Representing the Coalition for LGBTQ+ Students

Anne Arundel County, D31

3/7/25

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

I am a practicing psychologist who lives and works in Anne Arundel County (D31) and I represent the Coalition for LGBTQ+ Students. **I am strongly and vehemently OPPOSED to House Bill 1399.** I am deeply disappointed by the legislators that are sponsoring this bill. Do they have any idea of the adverse medical and psychological effects that the passage of this bill would cause? Prohibiting hormone therapy for minors in Maryland would result in severe medical and psychological harm for transgender youth and their loved ones. To call this bill the “Protect the Kids Act” is manipulative and ludicrous. This bill should instead be called the “Endanger the Kids Act” or “Drive the Kids to Suicide Act.”

The professional opinion from medical experts is crystal clear. All the major medical associations including the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) strongly advocate for hormone therapy to be available to transgender youth (See American Academy of Pediatrics [*Ensuring Comprehensive Care and Support for Transgender and Gender-Diverse Children and Adolescents*](#)). Other preeminent health organizations such as the American Medical Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the World Health Organization all support giving transgender adolescents access to the health care they need, including hormone therapy. Medical experts are also clear in their opposition to bans on hormone treatment. The AAP opposes any laws that discriminate against transgender and gender-diverse individuals, and has expressed alarm about the growing number of states that are banning trans affirming care. Medical experts are also very concerned about bans like this

as they inappropriately interfere with the doctor-patient relationship and are threats to patient confidentiality.

Prohibiting hormone therapy for youth has no basis in medical science. I fail to see why lawmakers who have no expertise in trans-affirming care or in the needs of transgender youth think they have the right to sponsor a bill that contradicts professional medical opinion. I believe it has a lot to do with political posturing and nothing to do with the needs of children.

Bills like this encourage fear-mongering and pathologizing of transgender individuals, which ultimately harms all of us.

HB 1399 is particularly egregious as it would cause significant harm to transgender youth. These youth already have elevated risk of mental health symptoms, including suicidality. I know many transgender youth and their families. They are terrified that because of current political agendas, they will lose their gender affirming health care including hormone treatment. For many of these youth, gender affirming treatment has been life-saving, as it enabled them to finally experience congruency between their physical bodies and their identities, their sense of gender and their overall sense of self. Transgender teens need our acceptance, compassion and understanding. They do not need to have medical care banned because of bias and political game-playing.

The legislators who are sponsoring this bill are using a political platform of fear-mongering and hate to harm children who are already vulnerable. This is disgusting and despicable. I am appalled that our elected leaders would use vulnerable youth as weapons to score political points. The lawmakers sponsoring this bill are not scientists who have researched trans affirming medical care. They are not physicians who are knowledgeable about hormone therapy for youth. They are not transgender themselves and it's clear that they have no personal experience with trans affirming care. Therefore, they have no right to make decisions to prohibit essential medical treatment for youth.

I urge you to OPPOSE HB 1399 and to 'protect the kids' by ensuring that hormone therapy continues to be available in Maryland for transgender youth.

Sincerely,
Abbie M. Ellicott
Representing the Coalition for LGBTQ+ Students
Anne Arundel County