

**Siena Iacovazzi
Greenbelt, District 22**

February 16, 2026

WRITTEN TESTIMONY: OPPOSED (UNF) to Bill HB0679. Health Occupations - Cross-Sex Hormone Therapy for Minors

Dear Delegate Heather Bagnell (Chair) and Delegate Bonnie Cullison (Vice Chair), and esteemed members of the Health Committee,

Please find below my written testimony to oppose the following bill: Health Occupations - Cross-Sex Hormone Therapy for Minors (Bill HB0679). Thank you for your attention and consideration of my perspective on this issue.

Best Regards,
Siena

My Experience with Gender Dysphoria

I have experienced the distresses of gender dysphoria since early childhood, and am still learning what helps me find relief from this distress and joy in being transgender. I spent several decades denying my gender dysphoria and its mental health impacts on my sense of embodiment, belonging, and self-worth. Receiving counseling and attending support groups in the past decade has helped me heal from the stigma that has been cast onto transgender people as a result of misunderstanding and misinformation related to our lived experience.

The blessing of freedom from my self-hatred regarding having gender dysphoria and freedom to express my innate sense of gender brought new experiences of joy, but did not relieve my gender dysphoria associated with my body. Only with my choice to proceed with medical intervention in the past five years have I experienced a significant reduction of gender dysphoria and the deep sadness and sense of disconnection from the body it had brought me. This medical intervention included cross-sex hormone therapy. The prescribed combination of testosterone blockers and estrogen relieved the acuteness of my gender dysphoria symptoms and I found joy in the feminization effects they had on my body. If I could have had this therapy in my youth, it would have prevented the development of unwanted male secondary sex characteristics, which can only now be remediated for me through very expensive surgeries.

OPPOSITION to Bill HB0679. Health Occupations - Cross-Sex Hormone Therapy for Minors

Gender affirm care implemented with the strict standards set forth by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) can reduce and relieve the suffering related to gender dysphoria. To force health care providers to discontinue the option of providing cross-sex puberty blockers and hormones for transgender youth will force many children with gender dysphoria to experience unnecessary grief and

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suffering as well as possible suicidal inclinations. This is the antithesis of the practice of medicine.

Gender-affirming medical care for youth is strictly a confidential relationship between professional caregivers, parents, and the child being treated with the methods that have reduced gender dysphoria distress for a high percentage of children. Many studies have shown this (see for example Chen et. al., 2023 and Orygen, 2024). Although these studies are lacking experimental randomized controlled trials, which is necessary to be considered “Gold Standard” science, it would be unethical to subject youth who do not want cross-sex hormonal treatment or surgeries to these procedures for the sake of scientific “completeness.”

I also think the proposed rule sends a psychologically harmful message to children with gender dysphoria that if they reach out for help, that they and those who want to help them will be punished and stigmatized. Faced with an unwanted puberty event, and the daily narrative that relieving their suffering through medical treatment is somehow criminal, a child’s mental health can significantly devolve into a lack of care for themselves and possible suicide. The Trevor Project has statistics that affirm these findings (<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/blog/anti-transgender-laws-cause-up-to-72-increase-in-suicide-attempts-among-transgender-and-nonbinary-youth-study-shows/#:~:text=Anti%2DTransgender%20Laws%20Cause%20up,by%20as%20much%20as%2072%25.>). When I went through puberty with suppressed and untreated gender dysphoria, I suffered from severe depression and suicidal thinking and inclinations.

For this reason, I OPPOSE this bill, which will punish medical professionals, parents, and most of all transgender children. Allow them, with help from loved ones and trained professionals, to find what makes them feel alive and happy in their bodies, even if that means medical intervention. One day, the child that may thrive with the help of gender-affirming care may be your own, that of a loved one, or someone you know.

References:

- Diane Chen et al., 2023. Psychosocial Functioning in Transgender Youth after 2 Years of Hormones. N Engl J Med, V. 388 N. 3., p.. 240-250, DOI: 10.1056/NEJMoa2206297.
- Orygen, 2024. The Associated Between Gender-Affirming Care and Youth Mental Health, Evidence Summary, 24 pp. (<https://www.orygen.org.au/Training/Resources/trans-and-gender-diverse-young-people/Evidence-Summaries/The-association-between-gender-affirming-care-and/CSV0000235-KT-evidence-summary-for-gender-affirmin.aspx?ext=.pdf>)