



**Maryland Commission
on LGBTQIA+ Affairs**

Bill Title: Health Occupations - Cross-Sex Hormone Therapy for Minors

Bill Number(s): HB0679

Position: UNFAVORABLE

Date: February 16, 2026

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

To:

House Health Committee

The Hon. Heather Bagnall, 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 679, which prohibits licensed health care providers from prescribing or administering medically necessary gender-affirming hormone therapy to minors and imposes felony penalties for doing so. 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.

HB 679 is harmful and medically unsound. Numerous peer-reviewed studies and major medical organizations have found that gender-affirming hormone therapy is associated with reduced suicidality, depression, and anxiety among transgender youth, including:

- [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.

HB 679 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.

HB 679 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. The bill imposes severe criminal penalties, including the possibility of life imprisonment, for providers who deliver care consistent with established medical standards.

HB 679 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 HB 679**.

References:

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