
TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HOUSE BILL 679
Health Occupations - Cross-Sex Hormone Therapy for Minors
Health Committee
February 18, 2026

Social Work Advocates for Social Change strongly opposes HB 679, 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. HB 679 would cause profound harm to 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 providers.¹ Thirty leading U.S. medical organizations have made public statements supporting access to gender-affirming care for minors.²

HB 679 ignores evidence-based medical care that demonstrates significant decreases in suicidality and self-harm among transgender youth who have access to gender-affirming hormone therapy. One study showed a reduction from 35% of patients to just 4% of patients needing treatment for suicidality and self-harm one year after beginning gender affirming care.³ Conversely, HB 679 is an approach rooted in so-called “moral opposition” that actively puts the health and safety of youth at risk by denying them life-saving healthcare.

HB 679 takes lifesaving care out of the hands of doctors and families and adds additional harm to children who are already struggling with significant adolescent and societal pressures. Adolescents with gender dysphoria who are denied access to appropriate medical treatment experience increased levels of depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation.⁴ Further, 90 percent of transgender adults who wanted but did not receive puberty blockers when they were younger reported contemplating suicide.⁵ 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.

Banning gender-affirming hormone treatment for transgender youth while continuing to allow the same medications for cisgender youth demonstrates that this is not about safety, but rather about identity. We cannot ignore the guidance of experienced medical providers. HB 679 would override individual self-determination and evidence-based practices that have proven positive outcomes for transgender youth, namely improving mental health outcomes, reducing suicidality, and enhancing quality of life. Moving forward with this bill risks the health and well-being of transgender adolescents and those who support them.



For more information, please contact

Chloe Kastner

umswasc@gmail.com

For these reasons, **Social Work Advocates for Social Change strongly urges an unfavorable report on HB 679.**

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.

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 Croteau, T. A., Gelech, J., Morrison, M. A., & Morrison, T. G. (2025). Psychological and physical health outcomes associated with gender-affirming medical care for transgender and gender-diverse youth: A critical review. *Healthcare*, 13(14), 1659. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare13141659>
<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12294553/>

⁴ 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/>.

⁵ 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>