

HB 679: Health Occupations - Cross-Sex Hormone Therapy for Minors: Please vote **TO SUPPORT** this bill.

Dear Health Committee:

I am writing to express my **strong support for HB 679**, concerning *Health Occupations – Cross-Sex Hormone Therapy for Minors*.

This legislation addresses a deeply serious and complex medical issue involving minors and irreversible medical interventions.

Here's why I support **HB 679**:

1. Minors cannot legally consent to most significant medical or contractual decisions.

Children and adolescents are still developing physically, emotionally, and cognitively. Decisions with permanent medical consequences should be approached with the highest level of caution and long-term consideration. **HB 679** recognizes that minors may not yet have the maturity or life experience necessary to fully understand the long-term consequences of such interventions.

2. Decisions involving irreversible physical changes should not be made based on mental health or endocrine dysfunction diagnoses during adolescence.

Medical treatments that permanently alter a child's body should **not** be administered based on mental health struggles during adolescence. Also, parents should **not** be pressured into making permanent medical decisions for children experiencing mental health distress, especially during adolescence. As a parent living in Frederick County, MD, I believe children deserve protection from irreversible medical decisions they may later regret when they reach maturity and that protecting children from irreversible medical treatments until they reach maturity is a reasonable and responsible safeguard.

3. Cross-sex hormone therapy can have irreversible effects, including impacts on fertility and long-term health.

Cross-sex hormone therapy can have lasting effects on fertility, bone density, cardiovascular health, and overall development. Given the evolving scientific research and the growing international and national reevaluation of these treatments for minors, it is prudent for Maryland to ensure that young people are protected from life-altering medical decisions that they may later regret.

4. **HB 679** provides a necessary safeguard while children mature into adulthood.

This bill does **not** prevent compassionate care or counseling. Rather, it establishes appropriate boundaries to ensure that medical treatment **aligns with** the principle of “**first, do no harm.**” Parents and physicians alike must prioritize the long-term health and well-being of children above all else.

Maryland has a **responsibility to protect vulnerable minors** and ensure that medical standards reflect caution, evidence, and the best interests of children. Safeguarding children from irreversible medical interventions is a legitimate and appropriate role for the Legislature.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to **support HB 679**.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

Trudy Tibbals