

February 18, 2026

Delegate Heather Bagnall, Chair
Delegate Bonnie Cullison, Vice Chair
Members of The Health Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, Maryland

Re: HB679 Cross–Sex Hormone Therapy for Minors - Unfavorable

Dear Delegate, Bagnall, Delegate Cullison, and members of the Committee:

I am writing to urge you to reject HB679 - Cross–Sex Hormone Therapy for Minors. I am a long-time Maryland resident currently residing in Montgomery County (District 19) I feel compelled to write to you on this bill not because it directly affects me, but because I care about the rights of children, parents, and medical professionals to make health decisions without interference from government. I care, and I vote.

I do not know who should receive gender affirming care and who should not. But I trust parents of transgender children, with guidance by medical professionals, to make these complex and consequential decisions.

I am deeply troubled that parents seeking gender-affirming care for their children are often denied the same legal protection as those asserting religious or traditional upbringing rights. Why don't we trust parents with sincerely held beliefs in science and evidence-based medical care? Of parents whose religious beliefs support gender affirming care? Religious liberty is indeed fundamental to this country; that is, no one religion should be prioritized over all other. Nor should people who don't believe in God be treated differently than anyone else.

Gender is not simple and not obvious at birth. I am making this statement based on a thirty-year career of research and advocacy on women's and gender rights including leadership positions at the American Association of University Women, the Institute for Women's Policy Research, the Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, and Women's, Gender, and Sexualities Studies Department at George Washington University.

Between 2018 and 2021, I served as the Director, Women's Caucus in the Maryland General Assembly where I had the honor of working with legislators from both political parties. I am sad to see Republicans that respected and liked supporting this bill. I ask them to think carefully before treating some parents with great deference while assuming the worst of others.

Sincerely,

Catherine Hill, PhD
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