

Pier Franzen
Portland
LD 380

Pier Franzen, LCPC
Portland, ME
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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee.

My name is Pier Franzen, I am a clinically licensed mental health professional, and a resident of Portland. I specialize in working with the LGBTQ+ community, including many transgender clients, and I am also a transgender person myself.

I am submitting testimony to oppose LD380, because I believe minors ages 16-18 should retain the right to consent to gender-affirming hormone therapy with or without parental consent.

It is well-documented in research that denying transgender youth access to medically recommended care, including hormone therapy, has devastating mental health consequences. A 2022 study in JAMA Network Open found that transgender youth who accessed hormone therapy had 60% lower odds of depression and 73% lower odds of suicidality compared to those who wanted hormones but could not get them.

Any reasonable person would affirm that ideally, parents should be included in decision-making related to the medical care of their children. However, when a medical need supported by research as necessary to prevent harm is steeped in stigma and politicization, and parents deny evidence-based medical care for their children against such evidence, we have a responsibility to allow these minors to make decisions about their own care.

If we care about protecting children, we must follow the evidence that gender-affirming hormone therapy saves lives, and denying it causes measurable -and preventable - harm.

Thank you for your time. Please oppose all efforts to block or restrict access to this essential care.