

Testimony LD 1735
Committee on Judiciary
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May 12, 2023

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Honorable Members of the Committee on Judiciary

My name is Danae Kershner I am a board -certified family medicine physician, practicing in Maine and I represent the American Academy of Medical Ethics I am testifying in opposition to LD 1735 "An Act to Safeguard Gender Affirming Healthcare"

As physicians, we know that brain development is an ongoing process through adolescence, especially that of the frontal lobe which is where executive function occurs Executive function is that part of the mind that is able to plan ahead, have emotional control, perceive cause and effect, and design and pursue goals That part of the brain is not fully developed until adulthood Gender reassignment is a mammoth decision for anyone, and should not even be considered outside the context of extensive counseling, and clear informed consent regarding the medical and surgical risks involved in both chemical and surgical gender transition Children do not have the frontal lobe development to fully understand the risks of making a gender transition, and can be easily influenced to make life altering, irreversible decisions which are regretted later in life How can they understand that by making this change they are subjecting themselves to significantly increased risks of myocardial infarction, stroke, diabetes, and thrombot embolism as adults, and that mortality is increased up to 50% over the general population? 1,2 Research tells us that 85% of children who report gender dysphoria are content in their assigned biologic gender when they become adults 3,4,5,6,7, An ever growing body of scientific research points to watchful waiting as the best practice during childhood and adolescence

LD1735 not only promotes inappropriate medical treatment for this vulnerable population but categorizes parents who want to protect their children from making these decisions in childhood as child abusers It would allow the State to remove children from their protective homes and families In addition, it would provide sanctuary for physicians who have violated laws in other states regarding gender transition to minors It would inhibit cooperation with investigation or extradition of these medical violators, and handcuff the courts from intervening in child abduction for the purposes of gender reassignment In a world where human trafficking is of astronomical proportions, LD 1735 would prove to be an open door to people who want to manipulate our children for their own profit LD 1735 will violate the primary tenant of medicine by harming our children and I strongly urge you to vote, "Ought not to pass"

- 1 Islam, N , Nash, R , Zhang, Q , Panagiotakopoulos, L , Daley, T , Bhasin, S , Getahun, D , Haw, J S , McCracken, C , Silverberg, M J , Tangpricha, V , Vupputuri, S , & Goodman, M (2021) Is There a Link Between Hormone Use and Diabetes Incidence in Transgender People? Data from the STRONG Cohort *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*, dgab832 <https://doi.org/10.1210/clinem/dgab832>
- 2 Nota, N M , Wiepjes, C M , de Blok, C J M , Gooren, L J G , Kreukels, B P C , & den Heijer, M (2019) Occurrence of Acute Cardiovascular Events in Transgender Individuals Receiving Hormone Therapy Results From a Large Cohort Study *Circulation*, 139(11) 1461-1462 <https://doi.org/10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.118.038581>
- ³ Green, R (1987) *The "sissy boy syndrome" and the development of homosexuality* Yale University Press
- 4 Drummond, K D , Bradley, S J , Badali-Peterson, M , & Zucker, K J (2008) A follow-up study of girls with gender identity disorder *Developmental Psychology*, 44(1), 34–45 <https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.44.1.34>
- 5 Wallien, M S C and Cohen-Kettenis, P T (2008) Psychosexual Outcome of Gender-Dysphoric Children *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 47(12), 1413–1423 <https://doi.org/10.1097/CHI.0b013e31818956b9>
- ⁶ Singh, D (2012) *A Follow-up Study of Boys with Gender Identity Disorder* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation] University of Toronto Available online at <https://images.nyimag.com/images/2/daily/2016/01/SINGH-DISSERTATION.pdf>
- ⁷ Singh, D , Bradley, S J , and Zucker, K J (2021) A Follow-Up Study of Boys with Gender Identity Disorder *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 12, 287 <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.632784>