

February 25, 2024

To: Members of Kansas Legislation

Regarding: **Testimony in Opposition of HB 2791** – The “Forbidding Abusive Child Transitions Act”

My name is Amanda Mogoi. I am a resident of Kansas, and I am a proud nurse. As a nurse practitioner, I provide healthcare to nearly 2000 Kansans at M-Care Healthcare in Wichita. I have worked in healthcare since I was 16 years old, starting as a certified nurse’s aide and eventually earning my master’s degree in nursing in 2016. I am honored to have been in rooms when life begins at birth and when life comes to an end. At both events, patients are typically surrounded by those who love them and there are a wide range of emotions felt by those in the room. I’ve laughed and I’ve cried with patients and their families. I think of my patients often, considering best courses for care or alternatives for greater efficacy. I smile when I think of their happiness and unfortunately, I can picture many scared faces of those scared to lose their right to seek healthcare in Kansas. I am invested in their physical and mental health, and I want them to be well. I feel deeply protective of the young people whose families trust me with their medical care. This testimony is presented as opposition to HB 2791, which will negatively impact transgender minor’s ability to live their lives with joy, acceptance, safety, and social and medical gender affirmation.

Nursing is based on 4 key principles – 1. Autonomy: the right to self-determine a course of care for one’s own self. 2. Beneficence: the promotion of good, ensuring that the patient’s best interest is always considered above the nurse’s personal values or beliefs. 3. Justice: fairness and impartiality regardless of age, gender, race, religion, socioeconomic status, or sexuality. And 4. Nonmaleficence: avoidance or minimization of harm, the responsibility to provide safe, effective, high quality, care based on evidence based best practice guidelines. For 22 consecutive years, nurses have been considered the most ethical profession by Americans in a Gallup poll. In fact, since nursing was added to the poll in 1999, nurses have ranked the most highly ethical profession every year, except in 2001 when firefighters topped the list.

In 2019, I was asked to begin providing hormone replacement therapies to transgender individuals. To do so, I sought out training and certification through the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH). WPATH is internationally recognized for producing the highest level of standards for transgender medical care. Since 2019, I have obtained over 300 continuing education hours specific to transgender care. Additionally, I completed a mentoring fellowship with a WPATH certified endocrinologist. In 2023, I tested for and became one of the 188 WPATH certified providers in the United States, across all specialties. I am the only certified provider in Kansas. I practice explicitly within the WPATH guidelines for the medical treatment of Gender Incongruence and within the limitations of my Kansas licensure and board certification from the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners. It is my ethical responsibility to provide high quality, competent, well-regulated medical care to my patients and I can assure you that I do not take this responsibility lightly.

The negative social, psychological, and medical consequences of withholding affirming treatment until persons have reached adulthood has been well documented in several

studies. The American Academy of Pediatrics, The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, The American Psychological Association, The Endocrine Society, The Pediatric Endocrine Society, and The World Professional Association for Transgender Health along with many others have affirmed their support for gender affirming care for minors including puberty suppression and gender affirming hormone therapies. For a minor to access gender affirming care, I independently and in collaboration with mental health experts ensure that the minor endorses persistent and insistent gender dysphoria over an extended period. It is my duty to ensure that the minor and their legal guardians fully understand the risks versus the benefits of gender related medical care including the reversible and permanent effects of therapies. I require all legal guardians to be involved in these discussions and legal, informed consent is obtained in writing from minors and their guardians.

Affirming chosen gender is consistently linked to lower rates of suicide attempt. Simply put, allowing transgender individuals access to gender affirming medical care is suicide prevention. I implore you to please give transgender youth the best chance at growing up. Research shows us that greater than 97% of youth who come out as transgender during adolescence will seek medical care and go on to live in their affirmed gender for the remainder of their lives. Unfortunately, in blatant disregard of the research, several states have already passed laws banning gender affirming medical care for transgender youth. For minors that were already involved in care, these laws tore away essential treatments shown to improve mental and physical health leaving parents terrified of the mental health declines sure to follow. Due to their inability to receive care in their home state, minors and their parents are traveling as far as 700 miles away to seek care in Kansas.

In conclusion, today, I'm asking you to think like a nurse. If HB 2791 is enacted, transgender minors from Kansas and other states will be unable to receive healthcare services in Kansas. You can allow these youth and their families the autonomy to determine the medical care that is best for them, rather than putting up barriers to accessing healthcare. You will be practicing beneficence and promoting justice by rejecting this discriminatory bill in favor of ensuring the best interest of families and youth. Nonmaleficence will be seen as you minimize harm by ensuring that Kansas stays the kind and free state that I know it to be.

Thank you,

Amanda Mogoi, MSN, APRN, FNP-C