

Submitter: Martha Shoultz

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2458

Jake's story

My son was a typical, very happy boy for most of his childhood. His interests started with construction at age 2, Superheroes at 3, then Ninjas and martial arts, tanks and ancient weapons, and hockey in Middle School. When he was 16 his personality changed after a series of sinus infections that we later learned had affected his brain, and he experienced trauma upon the sudden death of his best friend.

That same year my son experienced racial dysphoria – he is Caucasian but truly believed he was black. After the death of his friend, my son did not want to discuss it and immersed himself in research on the computer, where he apparently found a transgender Reddit group. A few months later, he announced that he was “trans.” On the advice of our pediatrician, who believed this was mental illness, we took him to Dallas Children's Hospital for evaluation by their gender clinic. Our pediatrician was as shocked as we were that despite my son's history of trauma, brain illness and racial confusion all beginning the year before his transgender announcement, the gender clinic in Dallas diagnosed our son with gender dysphoria, and advised us to start our 16-year-old on cross-sex hormones and blockers.

This was outrageous to us, considering that our son had no history whatsoever of gender dysphoria or hatred of his boy body. My husband and I would not consent to the treatment and luckily in Texas parental consent is still required, but the surprising diagnosis and “affirmation” of his trans-identity set the stage for our son to start hormones as soon as he went off to college. Since no one affirmed my son's racial confusion, he recovered from that as soon as his brain got a break from the infection, but since many doctors and therapists, as well as my son's girlfriend, have AFFIRMED his gender confusion, he has not recovered from the dysphoria.

We are terrified for our son after having read accounts from numerous detransitioners about the hideous and permanent side effects from the treatments prescribed to “trans” young adults, even without the gruesome surgeries that often follow. We pray every day that we'll find a cure for our son's mental illness before he allows greedy doctors to completely destroy his chances of ever having a normal sex life (or a normal life at all).