

Submitter: Robin Paterson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2458

Oppose HB2458

Minors are harmed by this bill. There is a growing and significant body of evidence that gender dysphoria overlaps with a variety of pre-existing, underlying mental health disorders. Through social media, vulnerable children are targeted by industry promoted propaganda. For example, surgeons who make a living performing "gender affirming top surgery" i.e. mastectomy on youth have been exposed for predatory advertising on Tik Tok and other platforms using catch phrase slogans and even musical performances to attract children. A child or child's family engaging the help of a licensed therapist is entitled to a comprehensive evaluation of the child's background and any underlying disorders. This bill interferes with the professional obligations of therapists and the rights of patients to be fully informed. As defined in the bill, the term "conversion therapy" is one sided, applying only to the process of differential diagnoses by professional therapists, and not in any way to the processes involving the "affirmation" of a child's gender dysphoria via social, pharmaceutical or surgical intervention. This contrived definition of the word "conversion" reveals an agenda that is not grounded in medical or scientific integrity. The proposed statute is harmful to minors and deprives therapists from exercising their due diligence in providing differential diagnoses.