

As the parent of a vulnerable neurodivergent child with long-standing severe mental health diagnoses, who adopted a trans identity as a teen, I strongly oppose this bill.

The unscientific and evidence-free premise of this bill is that having one's gender identity not in alignment with their "sex assignment at birth" (as anti-science a concept if ever there was one) is somehow a medical issue that requires swift, irreversible, "treatment" that comes with a range of known health risks and major unknowns and no evidence for safety or efficacy. That this insanity should at all involve children is unthinkable.

Developmental psychologists and biologists will attest that the brain doesn't mature until the mid-20s — later for kids most vulnerable to the pull of gender ideology (those on the autism spectrum, those with ADHD and other neurodevelopmental issues, those with comorbid mental health diagnoses including OCD, anxiety, and depression, and those who have been bullied or suffered other trauma). Until this maturation occurs, young people are more prone to risk-taking and other impulsive behaviors, and they are unable to comprehend long-term outcomes and consequences. Ask a child whether they will ever want children and they will often say no, or blithely state that they will adopt if so, belying not a shred of a concept of the complicated path to adoption or any awareness of the magnitude of personal change they will experience over the ensuing decades. Ask a child whether they have any concerns about accepting increased risks of osteoporosis, or stroke, or certain cancers, or autoimmune disease, or vision loss and they will tell you it's all fine. These are meaningless to a young person. Try explaining to a young girl that should she change her mind and want (and, despite odds post-treatment retain the ability) to have a child, she will never breastfeed, missing out on a crucial bonding and (free) feeding activity that will change her life and the life of her newborn. Try getting a teen boy, embarrassed about his changing body and his lack of control over his sex drive and the accompanying physical manifestations, to believe that in time he will grow into his body and that his drive is a healthy part of developing into male adulthood.

The people being prodded down the chute to irreversible transition are children. That any adult, let alone any clinician, would consider a permanent, experimental treatment pathway for correction of a misaligned gender soul is beyond fathomable. We are in the midst of the greatest medical scandal of our time — surely, despite the current comparable numbers, more heinous than the opioid crisis because of the involvement of vulnerable young people. Yet our representatives actively refuse to hear reasoned arguments. They refuse to acknowledge that Sweden, Finland, the UK, and now Norway are all but stopping these treatments for minors, happy to nod their heads rather than face reality or even feign curiosity about the sudden and dramatic increase of trans-identifying kids.

Anyone with college-level reading skills can see the flaws in the studies that claim to support the Gender Affirmative Care model — large loss to follow-up, short study period, small study population, inaccurate and shifting parameters and variables. The list goes on. Yet our representatives are happy to ignore these glaring problems — and the long-term studies that point to high desistence rates and high POST-transition suicide rates — and defer to self-serving, politically motivated medical associations gone mad.

I have witnessed the destruction of too many young people and families to count because of the blind adoption of trans ideology and the idea that a child who can't be counted on to make good decisions about almost every other aspect of his or her life, mystically knows about the life-long consequences of sex change operations. I am tired of the grieving of loving parents accused of "transphobia" for wanting thoughtful and evidence-based medical treatment for their beloved, distressed children. I am tired of the nonsense from clinicians who think no deeper about the issue than "it's just like being gay." And I am very much sick and tired of watching my former party support the unsupportable.

I strongly oppose SB 2002. Shame on those of you who claim to "follow the science" if you support this bill.