

Submitter: Catherine Shanafelt

On Behalf Of: Anonymous

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2002

To Whom It May Concern: I am writing in OPPOSITION to HB 2002. I do not believe this Bill is in the best interests of our children. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, "The brain finishes developing and maturing in the mid-to-late 20s. The part of the brain behind the forehead, called the prefrontal cortex, is one of the last parts to mature. This area is responsible for skills like planning, prioritizing, and making good decisions." If our youth are allowed to make huge, life-changing, physically altering decisions before their brains are fully developed, how is that helping them or looking out for their well-being? These decisions, if regretted later on, may have detrimental impacts and consequences. According to the law, children are children until they are 18, and while that does not get them to the ideal brain development stage, it sure gets them a whole lot closer to being able to understand what they want and how their decisions might affect them and their future. Please give very careful consideration to all of these factors before making a law that negatively affects children and their lives - both today and down the road. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration. Sincerely,