

Dear Committee Members, thank you for your time.

I am a former “trans” kid.

As a child I was insistent, persistent, and consistent that I was a boy.

I have no doubt that if the option to take puberty-blockers and cross-sex hormones had been available, I would have done everything I could to obtain them, including threatening suicide. It would have been so much easier to kill myself as a girl and become the boy I thought I was rather than work through the underlying issues that triggered my gender dysphoria.

In the short-term I would have felt better.

Testosterone is a controlled substance and almost anyone who takes it initially feels a sense of euphoria. It would have boosted my confidence and increased my energy and most importantly, I would have felt safer.

It would have allowed me to completely dissociate from myself as a girl and create a new persona who could pretend that the horrible trauma that triggered my gender dysphoria didn't happen to me.

It would have been so much easier to pretend that I was not the little girl who was brutally sexually assaulted.

But in the long term, it would have reinforced all the mistaken beliefs that caused me to develop gender dysphoria:

That being a girl was bad.

That it was my fault that those men hurt me.

That my body was a mistake.

That it was too dangerous to be a girl.

If I had been medically transitioned, I wouldn't have gotten the help I needed to work through my self-hatred and shame and anxiety but rather I would have been told that all my fears were valid. That I was indeed inherently flawed and the only way I could survive was to become a different person.

I never would have realized that my transgender identity was a coping mechanism.

I am so thankful that my school psychologist put me on a healing path. I am grateful to other therapists who helped me understand that my transgender identity was a result of the sexual assault not because I was born in the wrong body.

I shudder to think at what my life would be like if I'd been encouraged to believe that I was a boy.

I would have lived my life hating myself.

Puberty blockers would have retarded my growth and development.

Cross-sex hormones would have caused my otherwise healthy body to become dysfunctional.

The combination of both puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones would have left me sterile.

Children who says they feel better because of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones are likely telling the truth.

In the short term, these interventions allow children to avoid the difficulties they are facing, whether that be grappling with homophobia, struggling with autism, or trying to recover from a significant trauma.

It is natural for children to do what they can to shut down difficult feelings which is why we work hard to stop children from using drugs and alcohol.

We know that encouraging children to run away from their pain and struggles is not the solution even if it makes them feel better in the short term.

It is our job as adults to give children the message that no matter how intense and difficult their feelings are, they can work through them without dissociating from themselves to become a different person.

Because of loving, caring, and supportive therapists and teachers, I got the care I so desperately needed to process what happened to me. They gave me the gift of healing and I am so incredibly grateful.

All children who are struggling with gender dysphoria deserve the same gift.

Please support HB 454 the Save Adolescents from Experimentation Act.

Thank you,  
Erin Brewer