

OH HB454

Joint Written Testimony from [Women's Liberation Front](#) and [Family Policy Alliance](#)
Submitted February 17, 2022

OH HB454 – Enact the Save Adolescents from Experimentation (SAFE) Act
SUPPORT

Women's Liberation Front (WoLF) and Family Policy Alliance (FPA) are pleased to have the opportunity to submit written testimony to express our support for OH HB454 (Save Adolescents from Experimentation (SAFE) Act). This bill provides a comprehensive overview of the many reasons why it is so important to protect our society's children from unnecessary, life-altering, and permanent medical interventions.

Over the past few years, increasing numbers of children in the United States have indicated that they identify as “transgender,” “non-binary,” “gender fluid,” or as other types of identities that do not necessarily conform with socially-created sex stereotypes. According to GLSEN, [around 92% of these children are female](#). These children and their parents have been informed by myriad special interest groups, as well as some healthcare providers, that radical and permanent medical interventions will help improve the children's mental health. However, long term studies suggest that mental health actually worsens after intervention. Some special interest groups and healthcare providers even claim that medical interventions will save children's lives; they insinuate – and sometimes even directly state – that children who do not receive so-called “gender affirming treatment” will die by suicide. This claim is not supported by evidence.

According to the [Gender Mapping Project](#), the number of medical intervention providers for vulnerable children has dramatically grown over the past decade; there are now more than 800 clinics that provide services related to so-called “gender affirmation” or gender dysphoria treatments for children.

These clinics offer a range of experimental medical services to children, including cross-sex hormones, puberty-blocking drugs, double mastectomies, radical hysterectomies, and numerous other procedures. Independent for-profit surgeons also advertise to children on social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram. Young people immersed in online social media are, in many instances, swept into an online fantasy, fuelled by shiny, glossy stories of the “wonders” of permanent physical modifications such as double mastectomies. Increased public promotion of drugs and surgeries to alter children's superficial appearances, along with threats that their children will die by

suicide if they do not receive these treatments, have caused many parents to believe that it is appropriate and even necessary for their children and teenagers to undergo permanent and life-altering medical interventions.

HB454 cogently summarizes many of the reasons that unnecessary medical interventions dramatically endanger female and male children; WoLF and FPA agree with the assessments made in this bill about the deleterious impact of cross-sex hormones and cosmetic surgical procedures on young people. It doesn't matter if a child is 10, or 14, or 17 – the child will undoubtedly be affected for the rest of his or her life by the decisions made by adults responsible for that child's mental and physical well-being.

WoLF receives a number of [submissions from adults who are extremely concerned about children being harmed by unnecessary medical treatments](#). One mother explained that her middle school daughter seemed to be swept away by a social contagion along with her female friends, stating, "It was literally overnight, as if an infection had swept them all away." This mother watched in horror as her daughter became convinced she was actually a boy; her daughter was eventually able to move past this delusion with the help of counseling and medications:

"Ironically, it was my daughter's mental health crisis that saved her. As she spiraled deeper into depression, she withdrew from her friend group and eventually lost touch with them as middle school wore on. Thanks to therapy and the right balance of meds, she began to come out of her depressive haze once she entered high school. She confessed that the persona she had adopted was as a result of the trauma of puberty. She is now happy and healthy. She considers herself bi, but she embraces her female identity."

Numerous parents have expressed concerns to WoLF about how their own children – and adults who are supposed to be helping their children – use the threat of suicide to try to coerce them into supporting "gender affirming treatments. One parent described the harm caused by a counselor who used threats of the child's suicide against the parent:

"My son's therapist told me if I didn't affirm him, he'd be a serious suicide risk. I was terrified. I love my son. So I affirmed his delusion that he's actually a girl. It was only after a pediatric endocrinologist prescribed health-destroying experimental drugs, and after a mere 20 minute consultation, that I actively questioned the validity of the affirmation model

of care. When I looked below the rainbow veneer, I realized that no one is born in the wrong body and it is abusive to tell a child their body is wrong. I never got that Lupron prescription filled. I am SO GLAD I followed my gut feelings and desisted. No parent has the right to steal from their child the right to grow up. And now my son is a happy teenager going through normal puberty. He has confided that he thinks he might be gay, which we accept. My son is a gender non-conforming boy who is into theater, not sports. Long hair, not short. And he's wonderful. We love him just the way he is. No "transition" is needed, he is free to be himself."

A young woman who previously believed that she was a boy, due to peer influences and adult encouragement of such beliefs, contacted WoLF to explain her concerns for young children, especially girls, who believe that they are the opposite sex:

"I'm really worried about kids who are coming up in school now. I feel like opting out of being a girl is now a cure all treatment for everything. Don't like your body? You're a guy! Don't like "girl stuff?" You're a guy! Don't "like" boys? You're a guy! There are all kinds of reasons a girl might not feel comfortable being a girl at that age. Sexual trauma, puberty issues, struggles with sexuality. Why is "you're a guy!" always the easy answer? Maybe it shouldn't be that easy."

We agree with placing the burden of responsibility and accountability on healthcare providers (physicians, mental health providers, and other medical healthcare professionals) and school employees (nurses, counselors, teachers, principals, or other officials or staff at public or private schools), rather than parents. Parents have been placed under immense pressure to consent to medical procedures to alter their children's physical appearances. Most parents are simply trying to be loving and supportive when they support their children's desires for medical interventions. We do not believe that parents should be criminally punished for helping their children receive hormones, puberty-blocking drugs, or surgical interventions. This is because, in many cases, parents have been indoctrinated into believing that they are doing the right thing even when their children will be irrevocably harmed by these types of medical interventions. As outlined in HB454, professionals are the ones who should be held accountable for encouraging and/or providing unnecessary, permanent and life-altering medical interventions to children.

This bill provides a cause of action for children who are harmed by so-called "gender transition" or "sex reassignment" procedures. HB 454 grants them the right to receive

just compensation for the often irreversible harms they will have suffered, which in turn provides a strong disincentive for healthcare professionals to take advantage of vulnerable children and their parents this way. We believe this financial approach is the best way to help provide victims with the justice they deserve and discourage healthcare providers from causing them harm.

Thank you for reviewing our written testimony. We support HB454, and both our organizations are available and willing to further discuss these important issues with you.