

Blaise V. Jones, M.D.
100 Watch Hill Ln
Newport, Ky 41071

May 26, 2022

Susan Manchester, Chair
Ohio House Families, Aging and Human Services Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chairwoman Manchester, Vice Chair Cutrona and Ranking Member Denson,

My name is Blaise V. Jones, M.D., and I have more than 25 years of experience in caring for children. While I reside across the Ohio River in northern Kentucky, I am currently licensed to practice in Ohio and all of my full-time medical practice is in the state of Ohio at Cincinnati Children's Hospital.

As a rule, I believe that government authorities should interfere as little as possible in the practice of medicine and avoid interfering with the patient/physician relationship. However, I believe that the restrictions that would be enacted by HB454 are regrettably necessary in order to protect our most vulnerable and precious citizens...our children.

There is no argument to be made that gender dysphoria and gender non-conforming issues are a physical problem, and while recent versions of medical literature take great pains to avoid calling gender non-conformity a mental disorder, there is no question that the problem, such as it is, lies in the patient's psyche. Over the decades, many surgical and medical interventions have been proposed and practiced as a means for treating psychiatric conditions. Many have fallen into disfavor, primarily because they result in permanent alterations to the patient that are oftentimes more severe than the psychiatric condition being treated. These concerns are even greater when the patient is a child.

We know that children going through adolescence sometimes experience confusion about their sexual identity. For a very small percentage this leads to unwavering gender non-conformance as an adult; but the vast majority of adolescents are able to resolve these issues as they reach adulthood. To take away the chance of this resolution by allowing permanent medical intervention into the process is a violation of the Hippocratic oath I took when graduating from medical school..."First, do no harm".

We recognize that adolescents are not mature enough to make life-altering decisions in many other arenas; they cannot vote, be drafted into the military, buy alcohol or guns, or even engage in sexual relations with adults. To suggest that they are mature enough to make medical decisions that will have permanent and often deleterious impacts on their health based on confusing feelings about their sexuality is completely at odds with this recognition, and does them a great disservice. Limiting these sorts of decisions to adults, in whom society has granted full autonomy and responsibility thereof, is a vital role of our elected officials.

I am distressed every day that colleagues of mine have embraced the concept that it is appropriate to impose permanent physiological and surgical interventions on children for the treatment of psychiatric conditions that in the vast majority of cases will resolve without such treatment. I wish that we would

not have to burden the government with imposing restrictions on such behavior, but that clearly is the situation in which we find ourselves.

I implore you to vote YES on HB454.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Blaise V. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "B" and a stylized "J".

Blaise V. Jones, M.D.