

Dr. Patrick Timothy Ruck , DDS  
7850 Pfeiffer Road , Montgomery, Ohio, 45242

5 ,25, 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 Dr. Patrick Ruck, DDS and I am a practicing pediatric dentist. I have over 8 years' experience in caring for patients and am currently licensed to practice in Ohio.

The Ohio General Assembly should leave the practice of healthcare to licensed healthcare providers. I am gravely concerned that HB454 sets a dangerous precedent by interfering with health care decision making and parent/caregiver autonomy to discuss care options in consultation with their child's healthcare provider.

As I practice dentistry in a hospital setting, I perform a thorough evaluation on each patient and make treatment recommendations based on the best available evidence for that individual's situation. In my experience, parents/caregivers do the best they can, often in difficult circumstances, to make decisions they believe are in their child's best interest. I personally have cared for and currently care for multiple patients struggling with a diagnosis of gender dysphoria.

HB454 would place medical professionals in an ethical dilemma: we would have to refrain from providing evidence-based care to patients struggling with a diagnosis of gender dysphoria or lose our medical license. **I cannot imagine another diagnosis where a state law would prohibit us from delivering evidence-based care.**

In a time when the demand for child and adolescent mental health care is at its highest, HB454 makes the demand even higher. I address patients' mental health every day. Many patients who have behavioral and or mental health care needs also have translational dental cares needs. I was trained to treat the whole child; ignoring a child's mental health or a diagnosis like gender dysphoria is simply not responsible care.

I implore you to vote no on HB454. This bill sets a dangerous precedent.

Sincerely,