

Prepared Testimony of Cookie Dixon
Before the Health Committee
Hearing On House Bill no.96
May 14th, 2025

Good Afternoon Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the committee. Thank you for allowing me to voice my concerns.

Queer youth are almost always at a disadvantage compared to their peers, and the rate of homelessness is far above that of their straight and cisgender peers. A whopping 28% of queer youth have reported experiencing homelessness or housing instability, and this statistic jumps up to around 38% for transgender youth. A majority of this is from unsupportive parents kicking their child out on the streets for their identity.

Homeless shelters are imperative to trans youth for this reason. The solution is clear, and it is not to refuse affirmation to a trans child. Refusing to fund youth shelters that affirm transition only contributes to the problem, and will only lead to an increase of trans youth being hurt, killed, arrested, and generally neglected on the streets. Best case scenario for these children, they are either forcibly detransitioned or the shelter hides their identity, which can lead to even worse issues down the line.

This is a clear pattern we have seen before; access to services is denied to trans youth under the guise of ‘protecting’ them, the provisions are then pushed forward to be even more broad, and then provisions are put in place restricting these rights for trans adults as well. This has been done countless times, with restrictions on sports participation, restrictions on gender affirming care, restrictions on access to public restrooms, and now proposed restrictions to homeless shelters. Let me put it clearly- this will *kill* trans youth. Be it suicide or a hate crime, this will exacerbate the already disconcertingly high rates of death for trans youth.

This pattern continues with another provision in the bill, which restricts the recognized sexes to male and female. This completely erases legal recognition of transgender, non-binary, intersex, and other individuals. Sex wasn’t even included on passports until relatively recently, with passports from as recently as the 1960s lacking sex designations. Our country thrived for nearly 200 years before even needing to recognize sex. This provision has no place to exist within a funding bill, and its purpose is clear; an attempt to invalidate and continue to restrict the rights of trans individuals.

Finally, The provision banning menstrual products in men’s restrooms is a clear swipe at transgender men. There is no reason menstrual products should be completely barred from men’s restrooms, and only further restricts access to products that are already difficult to find even in women’s restrooms. Not only is access to these products helpful for transgender men, it can be helpful for cisgender women. If the women’s restroom has run out, then she can ask someone to get her a pad or tampon from the men’s. If the women’s restroom is blocked off for maintenance or some other common occurrence, and she has to go to the men’s, then she still has access to the accommodations she needs.

I hope you can choose to help save the lives of transgender youth, choose to continue recognizing us as people, and choose to allow trans men the accommodations they need.

Thank you for your time.