

Honorable Committee Members:

My name is Kristi Khan, and I live in Colby. I am a concerned constituent here to talk about HB2071. The reason this bill is so important to me, that I am making the trip from Colby here today, is that my one and only child was transgender. I say was, because he completed suicide in his dorm room because of bills like this being passed in this country. He was made to feel like his life did not matter, that he did not deserve to live, by bullies who were not only in his school but also from adults and politicians, who have decided they know better than him or others like him, than us parents, and the doctors/specialists who actually have the knowledge, education, expertise, and experience. Those who attack transgender people, young and old, have no idea what is involved or what our families go through. I did everything I could to help my child, including taking my child all over our state seeking help from therapists, psychiatrists, physicians, specialists, whom I originally had hoped would tell me this was just a phase, but I realized it wasn't. People like to say we or the schools or social media are pushing our children to be transgender which is not true. I was so in love and proud of the little girl I thought I had and that I had always wanted, and I would never want to see my child suffer and in pain. As for schools, my child was relentlessly bullied by other kids, who have been raised by parents to hate and hurt others who are different. So, tell me if this is a "choice" like everyone thinks it is, who would choose to live with emotional pain and feeling unsafe every day of their lives.

To those who say irreparable harm is done to our children and it is just "mental illness," I can tell you from experience that this is never a decision that is made lightly, with a lot of research made and a lot of appointments with therapists, psychiatrists, and doctors, that the first step is social transitioning which includes clothing, hair, name change. There is a long process of steps to ensure the child is ready for each step, nothing impulsive being done, which includes hormones and maybe eventually surgery one day, though my son never made it that far as it did require him to be 18 before he could even make an appointment with a surgeon and also letters from his doctor, therapist, and psychiatrist that he was ready for that step, and my son lost his will to live and any hope that he would be safe to live his life, to become a nurse one day helping others, or safe to even just leave his home due to the hate and fear mongering that has been spread.

In my son's last written words to me, 2 weeks after he texted me to find a lawyer as he was worried about the bills being brought and passed, he stated he was not made for our society and not strong enough to go one, that it was probably okay, because he wasn't going to discover the cure for cancer, and that our love and support for him is what kept him alive as long as he was. I ask that you listen to us in opposition of this bill and do the research, get rid of any biases you already have so that no other parents have to live with the pain of losing their child and prevent anyone else from thinking they don't belong and should die.

Thank you for your time,

Kristi Khan