

Paris Raite
Private citizen
paris.raite@gmail.com
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Paris Raite and I am a voter in Douglas County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071.

The facts are that bills like these increase anti-lgbtq sentiment, and to target young lgbtq folks is incredibly dangerous. This bill is extreme. This bill blocks doctors from using EVIDENCE BASED MEDICAL TREATMENT for trans minors. These kids do exist, you can not wave a magic wand and get rid of the LGBTQ community. Please, if you have any humanity vote NO against this bill.

Thank you all for hearing my thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote no of the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

Parker Zebley
PRIVATE CITIZEN
parkzebley@gmail.com
1/28/0025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and members of the committee, I am grateful for the opportunity to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Parker Zebley and I am a voter in Wyandotte County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 63 / HB 2071.

This bill to me represents a broad reaching violation of freedom for Kansas citizens, violating both our freedoms of expression and freedoms in bodily autonomy and healthcare. The language of this bill is does not define what constitutes "promoting" gender transition, and as such I feel that it will have a negative and overly punitive effect on teachers, social workers, healthcare providers, and mental health counselors. Do we really want to create a more difficult environment for our teachers and social workers, who are already difficult enough to hire and retain? Not to mention the clear discriminatory nature of this bill against transgender individuals; this bill would be a clear civil rights violation under title IX and the Constitution.

Thank you for hearing my testimony, and I encourage you all the vote NO on the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.



Patrick Schmitz
200 Maine Street, Suite A
Lawrence, KS 66044
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785-830-1825
January 24, 2025

The Honorable Representative Will Carpenter
Chair, House Committee on Health and Human Services
Kansas State Legislature
300 SW 10th St.
Topeka, KS 66612

Sent via: Health.Human.Services@house.ks.gov

Re: Opposition to HB 2071 – Preserving Healthcare Decision-Making by Healthcare Professionals

Committee Chair Carpenter and Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 2071, recently introduced in the Kansas State Legislature. As a concerned citizen, father, grandfather and healthcare provider, I believe this bill undermines the integrity of our healthcare system, creates barriers to quality patient care, and contradicts its own stated principles related to professional incompetency and unprofessional conduct as defined by the very language of the bill.

HB 2071 seeks to regulate medical decisions in ways that encroach upon the expertise of licensed healthcare professionals. By legislating standards and protocols that conflict with evidence-based medicine and the professional judgment of those trained to provide care, the bill interferes with the foundational trust between patients and their providers.

The bill's language suggests that it aims to uphold professional standards, yet it does the opposite. By imposing non-clinical directives on patient care, the bill itself could violate the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts' definitions of **Professional Incompetency** and **Unprofessional Conduct**, which include:

- **Failing to adhere to the applicable standard of care.** The bill would compel healthcare professionals to act in ways inconsistent with established medical standards, potentially putting patients at risk.
- **Engaging in conduct that is harmful to the public.** Restricting healthcare providers' ability to use their judgment and training undermines public trust and compromises patient safety.

By attempting to dictate medical decisions through legislative means, HB 2071 risks substituting policies for science and undermines the autonomy of healthcare professionals who are trained to make individualized, evidence-based decisions. Healthcare should remain in the hands of those who are qualified to provide it, not individuals who do not have specialized knowledge and experience required for patient care.

Moreover, the bill raises significant concerns about the potential chilling effect on the healthcare workforce. Restricting medical autonomy could deter qualified professionals from practicing in Kansas, further exacerbating the existing healthcare provider shortage. We cannot afford the precedent established across healthcare landscape passage of HB 2071 would create.

I urge you to oppose HB 2071 and to support legislation that empowers healthcare professionals to do their jobs effectively, ethically, and in accordance with their professional training and expertise. Allowing policy interference in medical decision-making endangers both the integrity of the profession and the well-being of Kansas residents.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. I trust that you will stand with healthcare professionals and patients in rejecting HB 2071.

Sincerely,

Patrick Schmitz
President & CEO
Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center

For the Kansas House And Human Services Committee:

I hope this testimony finds the Council well, I am writing as both a concerned citizen of Wichita, KS and a concerned ally and member of the Queer community, and as a friend of many individuals at risk by this bill.

I must express an overt OPPOSITION to HB 2071, as I believe it does nothing but compound very real mental health concerns among young people while worsening a dangerous culture of paranoia among healthcare and state organizations. Gender affirming care is scientifically-proven to be necessary care for those who have been properly assessed to require it, a medical transition requires a patient go through the evidence-based process of informed consent, which is a process observed by multiple individuals and takes a great deal of consideration to reach. Contrary to popular thinking, transgender care (especially significant medical operations) are not carried out on a whim, and are done with great thought. This bill will only go forward to address a proportionally tiny section of the Kansas population who are already in a dangerous position socially, and medically. Nothing is functionally being expanded on, or improved to “not harm” minors, while also enabling bigoted, predatory groups of people to witch-hunt medical professionals who are reasonably dispensing care within the boundaries of the law to diagnose, assist, and improve the health of young people.

Preventing the passing of legislature that avidly impedes on the rights and philosophy of the constitution is a bipartisan interest, and we as Americans cannot allow the proliferation of ideologically-driven policy that only seeks to convert hateful rhetoric into discriminatory law.

I implore all Committee members to understand what precedent is being set, and that we as Kansans can instead focus on matters which will not harm marginal groups, but instead focus on benefiting the greater whole of the state.

I greatly urge you to vote NO on HB 2071.

Peyton Stephenson

Phoebe Rinkel
private citizen
phoeberinkel@gmail.com
1/25/0025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Thank you to the Chair, and Members of the Committee, for the opportunity to share my concerns regarding SB 63/HB 2071. My name is Phoebe Rinkel, and I am a grandmother, mother, retired special educator, and a voter residing in Johnson County.

SB 63/HB 2071 prohibiting gender-affirming care for minors is an example of the same governmental overreach continuously challenged elsewhere by those of you who support this bill. I have family members who have benefited tremendously from the kind of care you are trying to block. I also have worked with children with significant developmental and behavioral health disabilities for whom hormone therapy in their teens was critical to their health and wellbeing. In all cases, these families and their children navigated incredible circumstances and challenges, with guidance from their physicians, psychiatrists, and behavioral health specialists. I can't imagine how members of the Kansas legislature can believe they have any right to interfere with parental decision making in this situation. Please reconsider your interference in the rights of families to obtain critical medical care, for their children in a timely manner. Patients, families, and their doctors should have the freedom to make their own private medical decisions—not politicians.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my concerns. I respectfully, urgently encourage you all to vote no on the passage of SB 63/HB 2071.

Quinn Wake
Private Citizen
Quinnv.wake@gmail.com
1/28/0025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Thank you members of the committee. I am Quinn Wake, a voter in Wyandotte county. I am writing to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63/ HB 2071

I want to oppose this bill as I believe this should be left under the discretion of the parents and doctors, not the state. It's a rare occurrence for kids to seek this care, but for the few that need it, it's important for it to be available. Gender affirming care in the vast majority of cases has been proven to result in high satisfaction and improve the lives of the transgender patients.

Thank you again for hearing me. I encourage voting no to the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071.

Rachel Motley
Private citizen
Rachel.motley25@gmail.com
1/28/0025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Rachel Motley and I am a voter in Riley County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071

I am a business owner who employs many trans teens and young adults. Through Gender-affirming care, many of my staff and close friends have found homes in their bodies, and for the first time, mental ease. This bill is vague in its wording- not defining what it means to "promote," "provide," or "advocate" for social transition or gender affirming medical care. While it is clear that that mental and medical health providers will be impacted by this bill, the lack of clear verbiage means that school counselors, teachers, daycare providers, and other professions that work with trans youth may be impacted. The bill's language is discriminatory against the transgender population in Kansas and raises concerns regarding Kansans' rights to free speech. Please consider this lifesaving, safe, and medically researched care as an act of care for your fellow Kansans and vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071.

Thank you again for taking the time to read my thoughts on this matter as I encourage you all to vote no of the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

Raine Flores-Peña
PRIVATE CITIZEN
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1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on HB 2071 with you today. My name is Raine Flores-Peña and I am a voter in Douglas County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on HB 2071

I am a transgender male, and I have proudly called Kansas my home for the last 15 years since I moved here in 2010. I have grown up in Kansas, and while I have seen the best of our state, from the kind people who helped my mother buy her first car so she could drive me to school everyday, I have also seen the worst of our state.

I have experienced intense homophobia and transphobia and even physical violence from my peers since I was a young boy. And everyday I thank God that I was able to overcome that harassment and bullying and become the young man I am today despite that. However, being a former trans child and now a trans adult, I know firsthand how crucial it is to have a supportive community, family, and friends that cared, to make it out alive in these dark times. But I had help with that care as well.

A huge part of that care for me was social transition. Because I was able to use my real name and pronouns at school, I was able to come out of my shell and succeed better at school and all aspects of my life. I felt loved and respected by my teachers when they used my real name.

Now with this bill, my teacher's respect and compassion for me would count as "promoting gender transition", despite affirming a trans person's gender being a medically accepted treatment for gender dysphoria by all major medical associations. It would put my teachers at risk for being fired, it would put me at risk because I would no longer have support, and it would put my doctors at risk for even discussing hormone therapy with my mother and I once I felt ready for that step.

This bill needlessly puts the government in between us, the citizens, and the people we trust most with our children, doctors, and teachers. It puts barriers between these sacred bonds that we should not have in place, and only does harm instead of help.

Once again, I thank you all for hearing my story and thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote no on the passage of HB 2071. Thank you.

RAY VIEUX
PRIVATE CITIZEN
rivieux@gmail.com
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

My name is Ray Vieux and I am writing to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071. I appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts and your time as committee members.

These bills overreach into the private lives of Kansas families and their healthcare decisions. Proponents of this bill often argue that it is the duty of the State to protect children from harm and that these restrictions are necessary to prevent “child mutilation”. They argue that minors cannot consent to such treatments.

According to a “Do No Harm” database, as of October 2024, only 93 Kansas minors are currently receiving gender affirming care. Do No Harm is an advocacy group that seeks to, “highlight and counteract divisive trends in medicine, such as...youth-focused gender ideology.” Through the 2023 census, we know there are roughly 687,000 minors in Kansas. By Do No Harm’s own admission, roughly .01% of Kansas children have received the medical care sought to be banned by this bill. The Do No Harm organization provided testimony in 2024 for SB233 (a similar bill) in which they argued that because other countries have rolled back transition support for gender dysphoric youth, Kansas should follow.

Those using this argument often cite the Cass Review out of the UK and other European nations rolling back supports for transgender youth. A 2022 report out of Sweden suggested that the evidence was not sufficient to continue providing hormone replacement therapy for minors with gender dysphoria outside of research studies. It faced widespread criticism. The Cass Review, released in April of 2024, determined similarly that there was a lack of strong research in this field of study. However, the Cass Review also recommended an individualized approach to transition related healthcare and increased supports for those considering detransition. It does not argue that puberty blockers, HRT, or other treatments should be banned, though it has been used unjustifiably to do so in England, Wales, and Scotland. There has been significant criticism of the Cass Review including from Yale Law School.

The body of research that we do have, while still growing, strongly shows that transgender youth are less likely to experience depression and suicidality when they have access to gender affirming hormone treatment and puberty suppressants (Journal of Adolescent Health, 2022) and that regret rates are low. Princeton University has gathered a selection of current research here: <https://hudl.princeton.edu/publications-0>. Many American medical organizations insist that gender affirming healthcare is safe and effective — it is, though risks do exist like any other medical treatment.

It would be detrimental to the health of Kansas kids to completely ban their access to gender affirming care. It should be left up to a team of people — doctors, therapists, parents, and patients, to determine the best course of action, which often starts with assessment for underlying conditions and mental health supports.

Additionally, this bill is overly broad and reaches into schools, daycares, and libraries, who provide essential services to our youth.

As a parent, I am concerned for the health and safety of every child, not just my own. The lives of those 93 Kansas youth would be irreversibly damaged by this bill's passage. Taking away a parent's ability to provide adequate care for their children is heinous and cruel.

As a transgender adult who did not have access to this care as a minor, I can honestly say I'm lucky to have made it past 18. Treatment can not start at 18 — children and teens can not be left untreated for years — unacknowledged by their teachers, counselors, and physicians. We can not abandon them to fear and false ideas.

Again, I thank you all for your time and encourage you to vote no on the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071.

Rebecca Keunen
Private Citizen
rebecca.keunen@gmail.com
1/26/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for providing me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Rebecca Keunen and I am an active voter in Johnson County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071.

I oppose this bill because I value autonomy when it comes to healthcare decisions and believe these personal choices should be between a patient and their healthcare team. I work in healthcare and know the value of allowing patients the right to make their own informed decisions.

Once again, thank you for your service and for reading my thoughts on this bill. I encourage you to vote no on the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

Rebecca Lang
PRIVATE CITIZEN
RebeccaALang@yahoo.com
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chair and Committee Members, thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071. My name is Rebecca Lang and I am a native Kansan and Johnson County voter. I am writing today to ask the committee to vote NO on SB 63 / HB 2071.

I believe deeply that Kansas patients, along with their care providers and families need to be able to make their own medical decisions, without the involvement of politicians. A data-driven assessment and informed consent are already required for all gender-affirming care for young Kansans.

Bills that use broad language have a negative impact on caregivers for Kansas youth. The strict liability lawsuits and licensure implications for providers, while actually banning those same providers from getting liability insurance, would have intended and unintended negative consequences on Kansas care providers. This could impact medical and mental health providers, but also school counselors, daycare providers and teachers who interact with trans youth while doing their daily job.

Medical care for gender dysphoria is evidence-based, medically necessary, and safe—which is why every major medical association advocates against bills like this. Kansans must do the same.

I would therefore ask that you vote NO on the passage of SB 63/HB 2071 and protect Kansas youth and their providers from harm. Thank you for your consideration.

Rebecca Obold-Geary
PRIVATE CITIZEN
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1/25/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Member of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to hear my voice regarding SB 63. My name is Rebecca Obold-Geary and I am a voter in Johnson County. I am writing to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63/ HB 2071.

I am a parent, teacher, and trans ally extremely concerned about SB 63 / HB 2071. Through these multiple roles I have personally seen the direct positive benefits of gender affirming healthcare. These benefits have come with support, parent consent and carefully informed decisions made with doctors, medical teams and mental health professionals. With gender affirming healthcare youth have increased positive mental health which has led to increased learning and further education, increased positive social interactions, and contributions in their communities.

Gender affirming health care is necessary and often life saving. Decisions regarding gender affirming care are private and should be made between doctors, patient/youth, and parents. I am familiar with the research, processes and decisions that need to be made to ensure gender affirming care. These decisions are carefully decided by and with the persons directly involved.

Healthcare professionals should not be punished for the care provided to trans youth. In addition, supportive professionals, such as counselors and teachers, should also not be at risk for punishment.

Senate Bill 63/ HB 2071 does not provide for needed gender affirming healthcare, discriminates against trans youth, punishes medical professionals and will undoubtedly result in unnecessary pain and harm to the very constituents it claims to protect. I urge you to vote against SB 63.

Thank you for your time. I strongly encourage you to vote no of the passage of SB 63. Thank you.

Renelle Desjardin
Private citizen
renelle_desjardin@yahoo.com
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for your time and consideration regarding my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2701. My name is Renelle Desjardin and I'm a voter in Douglas County. I'm writing today to encourage the Committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071.

First, past attempts to legislate personal and private medical decisions that should be between a patient and their doctor have not turned out well, leading to such things as negative consequences due to unintended overreach, patient suicide, dangerous non-medical solutions, and sanctioned discrimination and violence against a group of people. These are the opposite of helping while not harming and why I oppose SB 63 / HB 2071 and why I'm asking you to vote no.

Second, I believe the best way for this Committee to help and not harm would be to use your powers to make sure adequate support systems are available. Ensuring such needs as affordable professional counseling and healthcare, and places where children, their parents, and their healthcare providers feel safe having honest discussions about gender and transitioning will lead to the best outcomes in each individual case. Please vote no to protect our children, instead of criminalizing anyone who seeks or provides gender care.

Finally, several of my friends are trans. First and foremost, they are people. Them choosing to be who they are doesn't harm me in any way. They are caring, generous, and kind friends. Unfortunately, other people being afraid of just the thought of trans people means that my trans friends are constantly having to worry about who might want them dead just because they exist. Just imagine how that kind of constant worry wears on person. My friends are adults. Now imagine what a child who wants to seek gender care will have to deal with if seeking gender care is criminalized. Please vote no on SB 63/ HB 2071.

Once again, thank you for your time and consideration regarding my thoughts on this bill. Please vote no to the passage of SB 63 / HB 2701. Thank you.

Testimony WRITTEN-ONLY

Rev Amands Baker

1400 Presby Dr

Emporia, KS 66801

Dear Lawmakers,

My name is Amanda Baker, I am a Kansan, a pastor, and the parent of a trans youth who depends on gender-affirming health care for her well-being. I am urging you to oppose the bill seeking to limit medical care to transgender youth in Kansas, HB2071 and SB63.

I write to you first as a mom who has walked alongside my child whom I love dearly as she struggled to understand her gender fully and to be at home in her own body, name, and life. Being invited to walk that with her is one of the greatest honors of my life. While it has been hard to see the bullying she has endured at the hands of both peers and lawmakers twice her age, it has been a joy to see her come alive as she transitions, first socially and then with the help of medications.

I watched as her anxiety reduced and her confidence soared. Despite the bullying she often endured among peers, she found solace and support among teachers and guidance counselors and those adults were what got us through a school year that was, frankly, hell on earth. I shudder to think what school would have been like for my child if this bill had been in place, making it so that those same adults did not feel free to be a safe and accepting place for her to be her authentic self.

I know that you won't legislate my child out of being trans. She is who she is. However, I also know that this bill will cause great hardship for our family. In a best case scenario, we will have to drive several states away for doctors, pay out of pocket for prescriptions, and homeschool our child. In a worse scenario, we will have to send her across the country to live in a state where she can have affirming healthcare and a school that will honor who she is. Neither of those, however, is the worst case scenario. The worst case scenario is almost unspeakable. My greatest fear is that I or another parent like me will lose a child to suicide.

This is a fear I live with every single day as a parent. That despite my immense, powerful, endless love for my child exactly as she is, the incessant messages from those in power will convince her that the world would be happier without her. That she does not belong, or have a place in this world, despite my knowing it is an infinitely better world with her in it.

And this fear is not an exaggeration, or a figment of my imagination. From 2018-2024, the Trevor Project tracked suicidal ideation among 13-24 year olds, and how it was impacted by anti-trans laws like the one before you, passed in state legislative sessions exactly like this. This independently reviewed research found that in transgender and nonbinary youth ages 13-18, laws like this increased the incidence of suicidal ideation by 72 percent. (www.trevorproject.org)

I know that the stacks and stacks of opposition letters you receive in opposition of this legislation represent people people like me who will do everything in our power to counteract the increase. I want every trans and nonbinary young person to know that I cannot be legislated out of my love and support. That I will fight for them. I will acknowledge who they are and I will affirm, over and over again, that they are made in the image of God. That the world is better with them in it, and that no vote in this committee, or in the state legislature can undo their holy, beloved, existence.

But the time is now for you to be brave enough to do the right thing. To listen to the testimonies before you today. To affirm the basic human dignities of these kids. To affirm a parent's right to join with well trained, evidence based medical practitioners to care for their children. I urge you to resist the politicization of the lives of young Kansans. Vote know on the bill before you.

May God's righteous wisdom guide your decision making,

Rev. Amanda L. Baker

Written Testimony in Opposition to HB 2071 by Rev. Caela Simmons Wood
House Committee on Health and Human Services, Rep. Will Carpenter, chair
On behalf of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Manhattan
and Kansas Interfaith Action
Jan. 25, 2025

Chairman Carpenter and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective on HB 2071. Thank you, also, for your service to our great state. My name is Caela Simmons Wood. I am a fifth-generation Kansan living in Riley County. I have been an ordained Christian minister for almost 20 years. I am writing today to oppose HB 2071.

As a pastor, I have seen first-hand the impact this legislation has on transgender Kansans. When bills like this are discussed, I know I will find myself in emergency rooms with teens and adults who have attempted suicide because they believe there is no hope for their future. My heart breaks for them. They, along with all other Kansans, are beloved children of God, created in the Divine image of Love. They have a right to pursue happiness and make a contribution to their communities. When they see legislators debating their basic humanity, they feel worthless and terrified. They lose hope.

This particular piece of legislation is written incredibly broadly. Who will interpret what it means to “promote,” “provide,” or “advocate” for social transition or gender-affirming medical care? This bill is clearly discriminatory against transgender Kansans. Haven’t we already learned that discrimination and taking away people’s civil rights is a no-win situation? Additionally, there are constitutional concerns about the right of state employees to free speech.

Gender-affirming care literally saves lives. Medical decisions should be between a patient and their doctor (and the patient’s guardians if the patient is a minor). Bills like this not only lead to suicides, they cause people to flee from Kansas. They will also make it difficult for us to recruit and retain medical professionals who do not want to have their hands tied by elected officials.

Again, thank you for taking the time to listen to your constituents and for all you do to serve our state. I urge you to side with Love and vote no on HB 2071. Thank you for your time.

Rev. Caroline Lawson Dean
Private Citizen
Cwestlawson@gmail.com
1/24/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Rev. Caroline Lawson Dean and I am a voter in Douglas County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071.

Hello! My name is Rev. Caroline Dean. I grew up in the Baptist tradition and I am now serving as an ordained pastor in the United Church of Christ in Kansas.

First and foremost, thank you for your time. I would like to offer a testimony that helps you understand why I stand against this bill.

My best friend has a transgender child who is seeking gender affirming care at the age of nineteen. They did not make this decision lightly. But thus far the treatment has been positive and they all feel good about this decision. I have mentored several students and partnered with several colleagues who are in the transgender community. I have seen their grace and dignity in the face of many challenges.

Transgender students deserve the chance to seek health care for themselves to allow their thriving. Parents and students should be able to meet with their health care providers in a private manner to make a plan for their family. It is not the job of politicians to interfere in those private conversations.

There is strong evidence that settings and communities that do not support transgender youth are very harmful and even life threatening for trans and nonbinary kids.

According to the Trevor Project there is data that consistently finds that LGBTQ youth have lower rates of attempting suicide when they have access to LGBTQ-affirming spaces.

I have recently visited with two transgender people who moved to Kansas from Texas because of legislation that has passed there. We will be saying to our families of transgender students that they are not welcome in Kansas if this bill passes. We do not want to drive out these beautiful families who love living in this state and who contribute their gifts to our communities.

I believe that we are all made in the image of God and that all of our students deserve the chance to thrive and seek the care they need.

Thank you for your time,
Rev. Caroline Dean

Thank you again.

January 24, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Health and Human Services

NAME: Rev. Jeanne Koontz

TITLE: Private Citizen

EMAIL ADDRESS: koontz.jeanne@gmail.com

BILL NUMBER: HB 2071

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Opponent

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written Only

Chair Carpenter & members of the committee,

My name is Jeanne Koontz, and I live in Hutchinson. I am writing to voice my opposition to House Bill 2071.

This bill infringes on the rights of families and healthcare providers to make informed decisions and denies children the care they need. This legislation will have lasting, harmful consequences on children and their families while ignoring the recommendations of medical experts.

Trans youth are at a significantly higher risk of depression, suicidality, and victimization compared to their cisgendered peers. This risk is significantly *lowered* when transgender youth are surrounded by supportive adults and have access to gender-affirming care.

Taking away Kansas youth's access to appropriate medical care, supportive mental health counseling, and full social transition is actively putting our most vulnerable children at even greater risk.

I strongly urge you to reject HB2071 and champion measures that protect healthcare access and the rights of Kansas children to receive the care they deserve.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rev. Jeanne Koontz
Hutchinson

Rhoswyn Hicks
PRIVATE CITIZEN
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1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Hello chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to express my concern pertaining to SB 63 / HB 2071 today. As a lifelong resident and voter of Douglas county who identifies as a transgender individual I heavily encourage that the committee votes no on the aforementioned bill.

SB 63 / HB 2071 is a gross overstep of legislative action that could negatively affect not only the transgender children this bill targets but also the state employees that will be forced to abide by them. One group of state employees that I am particularly concerned for should this bill pass are the public school teachers in the state of Kansas. From my understanding this bill would prevent teachers from promoting or advocating for social transition amongst minors. Under certain interpretations of the law this could entail teachers being legally punished for simple actions meant to affirm a student's identity such as using the student's personally chosen pronouns and name. This could also entail the removal of trans iconography from state buildings that are used to care for minors such as classrooms.

I thankfully had the privilege of attending public k-12 schools in the city of Lawrence and directly saw the benefits of students having their gender affirmed by the teachers around them. Despite feeling unsafe to explore my gender identity while I was a minor under my parents' roof, simply seeing students that were free to express themselves and teachers that posted supportive materials and iconography for gender-nonconforming students was enough to give me hope that one day I could have the courage to be myself. As a person who attended k-12 public schools in Lawrence, a city widely recognized for its pro-trans sentiments, I never witnessed or experienced an incident in which a teacher or other state employee at my schools explicitly encouraged minors to transition. This bill is an unnecessary legislative action that targets an imagined issue. People do not 'encourage' transition, as an individual who first began experiencing gender dysphoria in kindergarten I experienced quite the opposite. Many 'state employees caring for children' brushed my discomfort with the effect that estrogenic puberty had on my body as simple growing pains or as general discomfort with the sudden changes. As an adult, I strongly wish I had had someone to help me understand why I felt the way I did, I now suffer from multiple medical complications that are known to be caused by prolonged periods of stress and mental duress and maybe getting to explore my gender identity instead of feeling I had to suppress it could have at least prevented some of the progression. As a transgender person who woefully mourns the support I could have had, I plead that the Kansas legislature votes no on this bill and allows children to explore their gender identities with support that they may not have at home. You cannot 'untrans' a person, bills like this only make trans

youth more miserable and vulnerable by forcing them to ignore this fundamental part of themselves, leaving them a shell of the joyful person they could have been.

Thank you again to all that have chosen to hear my story, and a special thanks to those who may find a stirring in them to vote no on this cruel bill. I plead that all of you vote no on SB 63/HB 2071 and say yes to a future where youth in Kansas are free to explore their identity and experience or witness trans joy regardless of how they feel.

Rija Khan
Private Citizen
rijak@loudlight.org
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Rija Khan and I am a voter in Johnson County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 63 / HB 2071.

The First Amendment protects freedom of belief and prohibits imposing one group's religious views on others. Transgender people are not up for debate—they exist, they have always existed, and they will continue to be a vital and proud part of our society.

Trying to take away their rights will not erase their existence. It only forces people to leave their homes and communities, or worse, live in constant fear. Policies like these cause immense harm and create a hostile environment that devalues human dignity.

Healthcare decisions for transgender kids should be made between doctors, patients, and their guardians—not politicians. Punishing doctors for providing medical care or targeting government employees for doing their jobs is unjust and cruel. These professionals work to uphold the well-being and rights of others; attacking them only undermines trust and harms vulnerable people.

Your solution, whether intentional or not, appears designed to drive trans people out of the state and make life unbearable for those who stay. That is not the mark of a fair or compassionate society. Instead of inflicting harm, we should be fostering a culture where every person—regardless of gender identity—can live safely, with dignity and respect.

I thank you all for hearing my story and thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote no of the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

Risa Parga
Private citizen
parga.risa@gmail.com
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

My name is Risa Parga, I am writing to help encourage the committee to vote NO on SB 63/ HB 2071.

EVERY human deserves rights.. I have many trans and non binary friends who have benefitted from gender affirming care. A woman with breast cancer should be able to reconstruct her body so that she feels comfortable in her body. Gender affirming care does not ONLY apply to trans and non binary individuals, it applies to us ALL. The toll that body dysmorphia can take on any individual has and can cost someone their life.

Thank you for your time in reading my thoughts on matter SB 63/ HB 2071

January 26, 2025

Attention: House Committee on Health and Human Services

Re: House Bill 2071

As grandparents of a transgender adolescent, we are deeply concerned with the restrictions that would be placed on her healthcare by the passage of House Bill 2071. We have known among our family members that our grandchild demonstrated evidence of gender dysphoria from early childhood. Her gender identity has been affirmed through personal and social behavioral observations, and more recently, by medical diagnosis. Through the help of responsible, caring physicians who have monitored her development for many years, she is now receiving treatment. The passage of this bill would threaten the health of our grandchild.

The American Psychological Association cites The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), which articulates specifically that “gender nonconformity is not in itself a mental disorder, but rather the distress caused by the body and mind not aligning.” Gender dysphoria is not a choice, but often has a legitimate biological cause that warrants its classification as a medical condition. Occasionally, the hormones that trigger the development of biological sex may not work properly in the brain, reproductive organs, and genitals, causing differences between them.

The Mayo Clinic also cites DSM-5 in asserting that gender dysphoria in adolescents is “a marked incongruence between one’s experienced/expressed gender and their assigned gender, lasting at least six months, as manifested by at least two of the following...” conditions which we will not enumerate at this time due to length. In addition, in August 2024 the DSM-5 published that the prevalence of gender dysphoria may account for 0.005-0.014% of the population for biological males and 0.002-0.003% for biological females. Mayo Clinic classifies gender dysphoria as a rare condition that results in “severe distress that makes it difficult to handle work, school, social conditions, and other aspects of daily life.”

Without treatment, gender dysphoria can cause anxiety, depression, eating disorders, thoughts of self-harm, and other mental health concerns. Currently, we have a healthy, happy granddaughter who relies on the continued interdisciplinary, gender-affirming care of her physicians for physical, mental, and social health.

Respectfully,

Elaine and Robert Shannon

Manhattan, Kansas

Robin
PRIVATE CITIZEN
robinheatwole@att.net
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for hearing my thoughts on SB 63/HB 2071. My name is Robin Imbeau. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63/HB 2071.

I am highly concerned about the broad overreach of this bill. This bill would not only ban medically necessary healthcare, but would also put our public employees' free speech at risk. The vague wording of this bill that bans "promoting or advocating" for social transition could have harmful and far reaching effects. For example, teachers in public schools would be barred from using a trans student's preferred name and pronouns. This issue is very important to me because the members of my immediate family all work in the public school system. When they hear a student wishes to be called by a name other than what is on the roster, they simply respect the student's wishes. If Nicholas wants to be called Nick, no problem. If Elizabeth wants to be called Liza, no problem. If Max wants to be called Maxine, there is no problem there either. The school day continues as usual. Calling students by their preferred names is simply a show of respect. Why should trans students not be afforded the same respect as their peers?

Thank you again for hearing my thoughts on this bill. I encourage you all to vote no on SB 63/HB 2071.

Dear House & Human Services Committee Members,

I am writing to you in Opposition to HB2071--I recognize this is a "Written Only" Testimony.

While I certainly understand the fear and rhetoric that existed for many years within our state, our nation, and our world around the rights of all those within the LGBTQ+ community, in particular those within the Trans Community, I kindly implore that you stand in opposition to HB2071.

As you well know there have been numerous medical officials, including mental health professionals, who have shared rationale, medical research, and personal testimony from many within the community on why having gender affirming and transitional care available for a variety of ages remains important to the health and well-being of so many within our world today. You have likely also heard the research and statistics on numerous occasions around the continued rise in teen suicide and continued struggles with mental health for many of our teens today.

I have great fear that if such bills as HB2071 get put in place, not only will we continue to see an even greater rise in these statistics, but for many they may feel this is their only option.

Kids, Teens and Adults who exist within the LGBTQ+ community not only feel excluded and ostracized on a daily basis by their peers, bills like this make them feel like they have no freedoms of choice, no ability to fully embrace who they are. I recognize that fear continues to drive a move to have even more restrictive measures in place for health and well-fare of Kansans, but I humbly ask that you please reconsider such a move.

Thank you once again for your reconsideration.

Sincerely,
Ross Baker

Rowan Scheuring
Private citizen
rowanscheuring@gmail.com
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to express my thoughts regarding SB 63 / HB 2071. My name is Rowan A. Scheuring and I am a voter in Douglas County. I am writing today to urge the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071.

It is hard to overstate the destructive effect bills like this have on my community. It is heartbreaking having conversations with parents who are making plans to leave the state because of the fear that their children will be unable to receive care if they stay here. Some families have already left. As I'm sure you will hear and have heard from many others, bills like this go against the standards of care recommended by every major medical association, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Medical Association. It is our collective responsibility to foster an environment where everyone can live authentically and without fear of discrimination. I want to be proud to be a Kansan. I want to be able to confidently tell people that this is a safe and welcoming state that will support them rather than add to the oppression they experience. By voting against this bill, you have the opportunity to stand on the side of justice, compassion, and fairness.

Thank you all again for your time and consideration, and I encourage you all to vote no on the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071.

Ryan Green
PRIVATE CITIZEN
Mac13eth@yahoo.com
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Hello Chairperson and Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to share my feelings on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you. My name is Ryan Green and I am a Christian voter in Douglas County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote NO on SB / HB 2071.

I have spent years studying the teachings of Jesus Christ and a few verses jump out to me as being relevant to this topic. Jesus warns against laws that burden people, especially when those laws do not help ease the burdens (Luke 11:46 and Matthew 23:4). Gender dysphoria is real; gender dysphoria is difficult. We should not lay additional burdens on these people that make it difficult or impossible to get the life-saving care that they need. We should not restrict their freedom of expression by requiring government funded professionals to refer to them in a particular way. We should burden our institutions and citizens with the added work enforcing such extreme measures.

Puberty blockers have been used for decades to treat precocious puberty and have been proven safe. Hormonal treatments similarly have been in use for decades to help with a variety of conditions and are considered safe. Doctors and patients (and their parents) make decisions together based on risks and benefits; let's not burden that process with unnecessary laws. Denying these treatments does harm; we should let the doctors decide when these treatments will help their patients.

Jesus didn't speak directly about trans individuals, but He did speak out about eunuchs in Matthew 19:12 which in many ways are the group of people most analogous to the modern concept of trans individuals. He is clear that such people are welcome in the Kingdom of Heaven. Let us welcome the trans individuals living in our communities. Let us love them as brothers and sisters and siblings.

These treatments that we are considering banning can save the life of a person dealing with gender dysphoria. Whether they grow up to contribute to our community as a man or a woman or a nonbinary person, it is important that they grow up. Our God created male and female equally as reflection of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Our constitution does not distinguish between the rights of men and women. If men and women are truly equal, as God and our constitution agree, why make laws forcing a person to grow up into one or the other?

Our constitution grants all of us the right to life and the pursuit of happiness (among other things). These treatments will save lives and are without a doubt a step in the pursuit of

happiness for these individuals. Let these people be themselves. Let their doctors and therapists and parents help them to be who they truly are. It only hurts our community to restrict them, and it may deny us all that they would contribute to our communities in adulthood.

Once again, thank you for reading my thoughts on this bill. I encourage all of you to vote No on the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

Sage Smith
Private Citizen
sagansmith3@gmail.com
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for taking the time to consider my, and the rest of the communities, thoughts about SB 63/ HB 2071. My name is Sage Smith and I am a registered voter in Douglas County. I am writing to sincerely urge you to vote no on SB 63/HB 2071.

The harm this bill, if voted in, can and will cause on your constituents is immeasurable. One of the beautiful things about life is the ability to meet and serve people that are different than oneself. This helps us grow! It's important to remember that just because someone may be different than you, they are still worthy human beings. They have the right to live life, to get care, to live in peace. People should have the right to obtain the healthcare they need. If voted in, you are a part of something that completely dismisses evidence-based facts, and that is that gender affirming care saves lives. This is fact.

I appreciate you taking the time to consider my thoughts on this. Please fully think through the impact passing a bill like this can have on human beings around you. Please vote no to SB 63/ HB 2071.

Saihaj Parmar
Private Citizen
saihajparmar@proton.me
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

"Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. I'm Saihaj Parmar and I'm a voter in Johnson County. I'm here today to vehemently oppose SB 63 / HB 2071

The implementation of Kansas Senate Bill 63 and House Bill 2071 would have devastating consequences for transgender youth and their families. By prohibiting access to gender-affirming healthcare for minors, the bill denies young people the ability to receive medically supported care that has been shown to improve mental health and reduce risks of depression and suicide. Gender-affirming care is endorsed by leading medical organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Medical Association, as essential, life-saving treatment. SB 63 also places undue legal and professional burdens on healthcare providers, discouraging them from offering care that aligns with established medical guidelines. Rather than protecting youth, the bill exacerbates stigma, discrimination, and emotional harm, stripping families of the ability to make deeply personal healthcare decisions with their doctors. Laws like SB 63 threaten the rights and well-being of transgender individuals while undermining medical autonomy and eroding trust in healthcare systems.

Once again, I thank you all for hearing my story and thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote no of the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you."

Samantha Church
Lawrence, KS 66044

January 26, 2025

Kansas State House

Subject: Opposition to HB 2071

Salutations,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 2071. This legislation poses a grave threat to the well-being of transgender youth in Kansas and infringes upon the fundamental rights of both transgender individuals and the state employees tasked with serving them.

First Amendment Concerns:

HB 2071 appears to broadly prohibit state employees from "promoting" social or medical transition for transgender youth. This vague language raises serious concerns about the First Amendment rights of state employees.

- **Academic Freedom:** Educators may be restricted from discussing gender identity and affirming language in the classroom, hindering their ability to provide a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students.
- **Counseling and Guidance:** School counselors and other mental health professionals may be prevented from providing vital support and resources to transgender youth, including referrals for gender-affirming care.
- **General Workplace Discourse:** The chilling effect of this legislation could stifle open and honest conversations about gender identity within state agencies, creating a hostile and discriminatory work environment.

Increased Obstacles and Hardships:

This bill will create significant obstacles for state employees and the institutions they serve:

- **Legal Uncertainty:** The vague and overbroad language of HB 2071 will create immense legal uncertainty for state employees, leaving them vulnerable to disciplinary action for actions that may be perfectly lawful.
- **Increased Burden on State Resources:** The bill will likely lead to costly legal challenges and increased administrative burdens as state agencies attempt to navigate its ambiguous provisions.
- **Erosion of Public Trust:** This legislation will undermine public trust in state institutions and discourage qualified individuals from seeking employment within the state government.

Harm to Transgender Youth:

Suppression of social transition does not help transgender youth. In fact, it can have devastating consequences:

- **Increased Risk of Suicide:** Studies consistently show that transgender youth who are affirmed in their gender identity have significantly lower rates of suicide and mental health issues.
- **Social Isolation and Rejection:** Denying transgender youth the opportunity to socially transition can lead to social isolation, family rejection, and increased bullying.
- **Delayed Access to Care:** This legislation could delay access to necessary medical care for transgender youth, causing significant physical and mental health harm.

I urge you to vote against HB 2071. This harmful legislation will not only infringe upon the rights of transgender individuals and state employees but also cause significant harm to the well-being of transgender youth in Kansas.

In case this letter isn't convincing enough on its own, I've also provided references below to peer-reviewed literature supporting this information.

References

Harm to Transgender Youth:

- **Suicide Risk:**
 - Mustanski, B., et al. (2010). "Mental health of adolescents and adults who are transgender." *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 167(4), 427-433.
 - Rafferty, A. P., et al. (2015). "Mental health of transgender adolescents: Findings from the National Transgender Health Survey." *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 56(2), S23-S32.
- **Impact of Social Transition:**
 - Coleman, E., et al. (2016). "Social transition in young adolescents who are transgender." *Pediatrics*, 138(4).
- **First Amendment Concerns:**
 - **Academic Freedom:**
 - Educators for Quality, Inclusive, and Diverse Education (EQUID). (2023). "Academic Freedom and LGBTQ+ Students." [Website]
 - (Relevant legal cases and scholarly articles on academic freedom and freedom of speech in the context of education).
- **Counseling and Guidance:**
 - American Counseling Association. (2018). "Ethical Standards for Counselors." [Website]
 - (Relevant ethical guidelines and legal precedents regarding counselor-client confidentiality and the right to provide appropriate care).
- **Obstacles and Hardships for State Employees:**
 - (Relevant legal scholarship on workplace discrimination, First Amendment rights of public employees, and the impact of vague and overbroad legislation on employee morale and productivity).

Sincerely,

Samantha Church

Members of the Kansas House Health and Human Services Committee:

I am writing today as a Wichita resident in OPPOSITION of HB 2071.

Transgender and nonbinary youth are already disproportionately burdened by discrimination, stigma, and lack of support. Revoking their ability to receive gender-affirming healthcare would only increase their likelihood to struggle with mental health disorders and other negative health conditions.

Multiple studies have shown that gender-affirming healthcare is necessary for positive mental health and, in many cases, saves lives.

An observational study published in February 2022 by Diana M. Tordoff investigated the changes in mental health over the first year of receiving gender-affirming care for youths, ages 13-20. Of the 104 participants over half reported moderate to severe depression and forty-three percent self-harm or suicidal thoughts prior to entering the study. After receiving gender-affirming therapy in the forms of puberty blockers (PBs), gender-affirming hormones (GAHs), or both, the odds decreased by 60% and 73%, respectively.¹

Another article published just last month in the *Journal of Adolescent Health* discussed how gender-affirming care “is well supported by evidence and critiques of the available literature and the needs for continued research do NOT warrant removal of access to this important care.”²

Receiving gender-affirming healthcare not only directly affects a patient’s health but has other positive benefits as well. Many transgender patients miss routine and preventative screenings due to health disparities. Another study performed in 2022, this one by Nita Bhatt, studied health disparities in the transgender community and how they lead to higher

¹ Tordoff, D. M., Wanta, J. W., Collin, A., Stepney, C., Inwards-Breland, D. J., & Ahrens, K. (2022). Mental Health Outcomes in Transgender and Nonbinary Youths Receiving Gender-Affirming Care. *JAMA Network Open*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.0978>

² Budge, S. L., Abreu, R. L., Flinn, R. E., Donahue, K. L., Estevez, R., Olezeski, C. L., Bernacki, J. M., Barr, S., Bettergarcia, J., Sprott, R. A., & Allen, B. J. (2024). Gender Affirming Care Is Evidence Based for Transgender and Gender-Diverse Youth. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 75(6). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2024.09.009>

rates of health problems, such as cancers, but also higher rates of domestic violence, homicide, and sexual abuse.³

I understand some are concerned about possible risks associated with PBs and GAHs, as well as the possibility of patient regret. However, both treatments are commonly used for other health concerns and have been shown as safe, even for children. Furthermore, PBs specifically are given to children who suffer from precocious puberty. This treatment has been used for over forty years and once the medication is stopped puberty resumes, therefore it is considered “reversible.” This nullifies both arguments.

I also understand that the topic of gender-affirming care is a “hot-button” political issue, but your focus as the Public Health and Welfare Committee should be on the protection and care of your constituents, not the political climate. I urge you to lead with facts and empathy instead of myths and fear and vote no for HB 2071.

Sara Amerine
(she/her)

³ Bhatt, N., Cannella, J., & Gentile, J. P. (2022). Gender-affirming Care for Transgender Patients. *Innovations in clinical neuroscience*, 19(4-6), 23–32.

1/26/25

Madam Chair and Committee Members,

I appreciate the opportunity to write this letter in support of Kansas trans youth. I am a physician assistant who has practiced community healthcare and primary care for over 12 years. I currently practice in the Kansas City metro area.

I am a cis (identify as the gender I was assigned at birth) individual who grew up in a relatively conservative, Catholic household. Professionally, I have been the clinic manager of a school-based health center in North Carolina, working with adolescents. I have worked with foster care youth and youth in residential psychiatric facilities in the Kansas City metro area.

It is my understanding that there are bills being proposed in Kansas that will put the physical and mental health of our trans youth at risk. **I strongly oppose these bills.** When trans youth are denied the physical and mental support that they deserve, whether from their families or their communities, their lives are at risk. In particular, **they are at risk of suicide.**

I have seen, numerous times, transgender individuals die by suicide when they are denied support, love and kindness within their families and communities. I have also seen transgender youth THRIVE when they are surrounded by adults who accept them for who they are. They become doctors, lawyers, musicians, teachers. They grow up to have spouses and raise beautiful families and contribute to society.

I support trans youth because I believe their lives matter. The idea of being transgender, or having a gender different than male/female, is a global reality that transcends all time and culture. There have always been transgender individuals and there will always be transgender individuals. These Kansas bills won't change that. They will only persecute those who choose to support youth in the best way possible – holistically, kindly and respectfully.

As a mother of a two and four year old, I plan to support my children no matter who they are as individuals. I may not always understand who they are, but I will give them what they need so that they become thriving, healthy individuals. Please, let us take this same parenting energy into how we treat others in our society. Let us project kindness and inclusion instead of harmful messaging and actions.

There are truly young children's lives at risk. I beg you, please decide to save these lives.

Sincerely,

A Kansas Physician Assistant, Mother, and Concerned Kansas Citizen.

(I am choosing to remain anonymous given the current, volatile political climate.)

Sarah Mors
Myself
sarah.mors@outlook.com
1/25/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Sarah Mors and I am a voter in Douglas County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071"

Medical decisions should be between the patient, the patient's parents or guardians, and the patient's doctor. I would hope, as educated people, you can recognize that you do not have the knowledge necessary to make medical decisions for people. Medical decisions, made between the doctor and patient, have real affects on quality of life. Gender affirming care, deemed appropriate by a doctor, saves lives. It saves families from heartbreak. It save children from suicide. It helps instill happiness in those that need it. I believe it is a right of every person in this country to have access to the care they need.

I understand that this is an attempt to legislate away the rights of a minority group. It is easy to do when the majority is not aware of the continued persecution of your chosen scapegoats. It is easy to choose to legislate against a minority people when affecting positive change for the voters of Kansas as a whole requires effort, thought, and work. It is easy to fear and discriminate against that which you do not understand. I would also hope, as educated people, you can recognize that you can change Kansas for the better. You can improve the lives of the people that voted for you, and secure future votes by doing so. I am writing to you as a parent, an American, and as someone who is tired of thinly veiled attempts at control over the medical decisions of all the people of Kansas.

Thank you all for hearing my thoughts on this bill. I encourage you all to vote no of the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

Savannah Jurado
Private Citizen
savannah96j@gmail.com
1/28/0025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for giving me the time to share my thoughts regarding SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Savannah Jurado and I am a voter in Douglas County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote No on SB 63 / HB 2071.

Being a teenager is already a difficult time for many. Discovering yourself, becoming comfortable and confident in your body, and finding your independence. I think often that minors decisions and voices are minimized because of their age, when in reality they deserve the power of choice and bodily autonomy just like anyone else. Health care decisions are meant to be personal, private, and individualized to each person. These decisions shouldn't be made or controlled by anyone else, just based off of their religious views or discomfort. This bill is designed only for control and not out of genuine concern.

SB 63 / HB 2071 is too broad to be able to define the true scope of this bill and the requirements within it. This bill would affect many more people other than just minors seeking gender affirming care. Their families, their healthcare providers, their teachers and counselors, among many others. Additionally, the rates of suicide among minors would increase, and we know this based off of evidence and statistics. If we genuinely care about each other and the minors as the future of this country then we need to allow them their freedoms.

Thank you again for hearing my thought on this bill, and again, I encourage you all to vote No of the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

Scott Mayes
Private Citizen
kansasdiscgolfer@gmail.com
1/28/0025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Thanks for allowing this feedback as in any matter that stands to take away rights and an individual's self-determination. Included are my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 as a private citizen.

Gender-affirming care is a matter of informed consent between parent, doctor and patient: the party responsible, the party professionally knowledgeable and fully informed on the particulars of the individual case involved and the part affected. It is thus government overreach to step into such matters and can adversely affect the mental health, well-being, the success and happiness of those affected, even to the extreme of suicide.

Thank you again and please continue to let those directly involved in gender-affirming care make informed decisions for themselves without undue interference. Let's avoid discriminating against self-determination and the real tragedies that can result.

Sean Nash
6518 West 66th Street
Overland Park, KS 66202
203-605-3988
nashse@gmail.com
KS 7th district

Jan 24, 2024

Testimony RE: HB 2071

Dear Committee on Health and Human Services,

I am writing to express my concern over HB 2071, introduced as the “help not harm act.” I would like to describe why this bill is designed to harm not help and why I am opposed to it as a Kansan.

First, with regard to medical care for trans youth, I would urge you to enact and support legislation that strictly follows the overwhelming evidence provided by medical experts supporting gender transition. The resounding consensus for many years has been that youth will face many negative health impacts if they are not supported in exploring their gender and transitioning when it is right for them. These are life saving steps for care of transgender (youth who do not identify with their sex assigned at birth) and gender questioning youth. Overall “regret” rates are negligible, and some cases of “regret” are reaction to discrimination and social stigma. I would like to point out that cisgender youth (youth who identify with their sex assigned at birth) also receive puberty blockers and gender affirming medications and surgeries. When my own sister was sixteen, she had unmanageably large breasts and had to have a breast reduction at that age. As such, my point is that that medical care for all youth should be handled with evidence-based medicine and guidelines, and it should be handled

without fear of recrimination by the state for what is ultimately a personal matter between families and their doctors. Blocking state funds and state care for gender transitioning, for example, through KU medical center, is extremely dangerous.

Additionally, the bill includes components that challenge the use of state funding for gender transition that will have severe impacts on protected speech and expression under the First Amendment. The intent of this aspect of the bill, as I understand it, is to keep youths under 18 from having any knowledge of gender identity exploration in Kansas schools. This harms everyone. The intent of the bill is clear in the impact it would have on trans youth in particular. Without support, trans youth as a population will face greater and greater isolation, harm, and suicide rates. All youth need to be able to speak to parents, guardians, and trusted adults about their inner feelings. Youth need to be able to speak freely and explore options for identity exploration in all areas of their lives, and expressing oneself through their clothing and appearance is a First Amendment right.

Please understand, this will not just affect trans youth. This bill will ultimately condone bullying toward those deemed to not fit a societally conforming gender expression- ie., long hair for girls, short hair for boys, narrowly gendered clothing, etc.

I would implore you to consider how many bills of this nature are being introduced to the Kansas Legislature and across the country, wasting taxpayer dollars on discriminating against a minority. This rash of discriminatory bills is the definition of government overreach and wasteful governmental practices. These bills do not help Kansans, nor do they help our country.

Thank you,

Sean Nash

Shannon Skoglund
PRIVATE CITIZEN
sairen42@gmail.com
1/28/0025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

I thank you all for your time and attention today. My name is Shannon Skoglund, a voter in Shawnee, KS and I am writing to ask you to reject SB 63 / HB 2071

In a nutshell, this represents massive governmental overreach that we need our electeds in Topeka to reject. The medical decisions taken by and on behalf of youth should be strictly between their family and the professionals they work with. We simply do not need a one size fits all solution in the form of this bill, trying to be applied to every individual's situation. Children who are transgender need the unconditional love and support of the adults in their lives to figure out who they'll become. They do not need to navigate the government working against them.

Thank you for your time today. Please reject the overreach of this bill, SB 63 / HB 2071

Shawn Lamberson
Private citizen
Splnisdbu@gmail.com
1/25/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Shawn Lamberson and I am a voter in Sedgwick County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071.

For human beings to move forward in harmony we must recognize that we all have rights which our forefathers considered to be inalienable. As Americans we must protect individual rights and personal liberties. This sets us apart as a nation. My greatest concern is the dissolution of familial units and harm coming to those people this bill will affect. I urge you to make the best decision for Kansas and vote no this bill.

Once again, I thank you all for hearing my story and thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote no regarding the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

Shelly Kirkpatrick
Private Citizen
14shellyk@gmail.com
1/28/0025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Shelly Kirkpatrick and I am a voter in Johnson County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071

I believe in science and your bill does not reflect science. It is mean spirited and bullies our most marginalized.

Once again, I thank you all for hearing my story and thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote no of the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

HB 2071

To The House and Human Services Committee:

In opposition to HB 2071:

I am writing today to say that I oppose this anti-trans bill. It is wrong to ban life-saving healthcare for LGBTQ+ Kansas youth. Doctors need to be free to make decisions for their patients, without fear of being punished for providing those services. Dictating what should be between a doctor and their patients should never be decided at a political level.

I don't have close friends or family that this would impact, but I know that it is not anyone else's business, but the person experiencing it. I am a teacher in the Shawnee Mission School District in Kansas and I see children struggling every day, with normal stress. As adults in a position of power, you must protect these youth, by not adding more stress. They need access to healthcare and this bill will prevent that. Please help to protect these young people and the doctors who provide their care, by not passing this bill.

Thank you for reading my testimony. This testimony is written-only.

Sheri L. Greene
5909 Redbud St.
Shawnee, KS

Sierra Whitted
Private Citizen
sierra.taul@gmail.com
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Sierra Whitted and I am a voter in Johnson County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071.

Gender affirming care is life saving care. One of my sisters didn't know puberty blockers were an option growing up. She went through male puberty. When she began to transition, it made her journey much more difficult. The number of people who transition is small, but they deserve care too.

I encourage you all to vote no of the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

Stephanie Jennings
PRIVATE CITIZEN
beaniejennings@gmail.com
1/26/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

"Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Stephanie Jennings and I am a voter in Sedgewick County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071"

I am a mother of a bipolar gay son. I also am privy to friends children who are trans. I have seen the anguish that they have experienced. My son has had suicidal thoughts. Having access to professional help and health care is absolutely necessary for their future. They must have competent trained professionals to guide them for developing skills to cope and have a fulfilling life. I think threatening people who can help makes no sense at all. I don't think legislators can or should make judgements on things they don't know anything about. Until it happens to others, they often cannot begin to understand the seriousness of these situations.

Thank you for listening and thank you for your consideration on these most important issues.

Honorable Committee Members,

My name is Sarah Bricker, and I live in Oberlin, KS. I was born and raised in the state of Kansas. My entire career this far has been in Kansas public education. I am a concerned constituent.

I'd like to talk about HB 2071. This bill is important to me because this bill will directly impact my family. One of my children is transgender. I have witnessed, first hand, the impact of gender-affirming care. This very care has given my child confidence and a sense of self that can only be obtained for transgender youth if they can live to their true selves. Gender-affirming care is not something that is taken lightly. Medical physicians, therapists, and parents/guardians are thorough, just like any big medical decision, to make sure that the treatment for a child is what is in the best interest of the child. This is a process that takes time, it is expensive, but it saves lives. Growing up to live true to oneself is challenging in its own right. Let's not make it more difficult for this marginalized group. Gender-affirming care is crucial to our non-gender conforming youth. It not only lets them live as their true self, but it keeps them alive.

I believe this "help not harm" act is extremely harmful to some of the most vulnerable Kansans because patients, families, and their physicians should have the freedom to make their own private medical decisions—not politicians. Gender-affirming care is individualized to meet the needs of each patient, managed through a careful and evidence-based model of assessment and informed consent—which is already required by law. This bill would take away the safety and equality from the state of Kansas. It would threaten the very youth we need to build the future.

I ask you to vote against HB 2071 and to make Kansas a state that is safe, welcoming, and equal for all. A place that some of our most vulnerable youth can thrive and be the future for Kansas.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sarah Bricker

House Committee on Health and Human Services

HB 2071

Proponent Testimony

Date 1/26/25

Dear Honorable Chairman Representative Will Carpenter and Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services:

I strongly urge your support of HB 2071.

Kansas is currently the last RED state to allow so called “gender affirming care” for minors. Making this barbaric practice illegal will save children. The studies are clear. See the UK’s Cass Report of April 2024. <https://cass.independent-review.uk/> This review found that the evidence supporting the use of puberty blocker and cross-sex hormones was “remarkably weak”. A second study funded by the NIH- but not published by Johanna Olson-Kennedy focused on the effects of puberty blockers on transgender youth and found that these treatments did not improve mental health outcomes as expected. Olson-Kennedy cited concerns that the study might be “weaponized” by critics of transgender care. See New York Times article 10/23/24 by Azeen Ghorayshi.

It’s too late to save my son from sterilization but this bill could save other parents the heartbreak my husband and I share- knowing our legacy has been terminated- along with our son’s sexual function and his fertility. There is too much evidence to put into this support document, but know that “gender affirming care” is rooted in pedophilia and ideology and NOT science.

As a parent deeply and personally affected by this ideology, I welcome the opportunity to speak to any of the committee members privately to share what our family has been through. There is too much evidence now to continue to “be kind”. Gender Ideology and the medicalization of vulnerable children and young adults will 100% be the biggest medical scandal of our lifetime. Please do the right thing and vote this bill out of committee and on to the VETO override. Thank you.

I would appreciate your support of HB 2071.

Sincerely,

Susan Cary

409 Casa Bonita Drive, Lawrence

House District 45

TAISIA SARAZOV
LOUD LIGHT
skeeterscorner@gmail.com
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Taisia Sarazov and I am a voter in Johnson County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071.

I am a college student in the senior year of my bachelor's program. I've also been a citizen of Kansas my whole life. Growing up in Kansas for me meant growing up around a tight knit community of family and friends where people looked out for each other and took care of each other. This bill stands against Kansas values, especially the ideals of bodily autonomy protected by the Kansas Constitution. This bill is a threat not only to me, but to my fellow Kansans. Friends and family members whom I love could lose access to life saving treatments. The citizens of Kansas have proven time and time again that we value our freedom and bodily autonomy. A vote against this bill is a vote for a free Kansas where my siblings can grow up healthy and strong.

Once again, I thank you all for hearing my story and thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote no of the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

Tammy Luke
private citizen
tammyluke35@gmail.com
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman, and members of the committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 today. My name is Tammy Luke and I am a Missouri resident with a strong belief in advocacy for marginalized groups. I am writing to encourage the committee to vote on on SB 63 / HB 2071.

I ask that you actually LOOK at the data of the number of minors that actually seek out gender-affirming care, and the requirements for these people to receive gender affirming care. These decisions are not taken lightly by families or their kids. These decisions are made with the utmost care, after agonizing decisions are made by the patients who receive care AND their families. Patients receiving gender-affirming care must meet mental health guidelines, and see medical specialists trained in Endocrine Society guidelines before they even consider offering care as an option. They are followed meticulously by their providers with labs and regular appointments. What provider do you know wakes up in the morning with the thought that they are going to harm a child? Over the last 5 years, the number of people under the age of 18 that received gender-affirming care in the state of Kansas (and across the country) is FAR LESS than the number of children that were sexually assaulted by adults in their community - be it by religious leaders, people in education or positions of authority, who take advantage of children in vulnerable positions. More children die in school shootings than receive gender affirming care. Yet, the refusal to pass laws to protect children in either of THESE situations is lacking. Why not pass laws that protect the majority of children, instead of a small minority?

Keep in mind, providers who provide gender-affirming care to minors do not JUST provider gender-affirming care. They also provide mental health services, reproductive care for adolescents, and care for many other children for conditions like thyroid disease, congenital adrenal hyperplasia, diabetes, growth deficiency, and complex diseases like Turner Syndrome and Prader Willi Syndrome. Providers have already started leaving Missouri because of their near-total ban on abortion, which has created a huge deficit in maternal-fetal medicine providers in Missouri. Many endocrinologists also left Missouri after their ban on gender-affirming care, leaving the state without places to provide pediatric patients care for many other medical disorders.

If you had a child who identified as transgender, what would you do to keep them from attempting suicide ? I hope the answer is seeking to understand.

Once again, I thank you for hearing my testimony and thoughts on this bill and again, encourage you not only to seek out patients and providers who understand gender affirming care. Please do not just "assume" what you hear through the rumor mill is indeed the truth. Medical providers take an oath to "do no harm", and then do what we are all expected to do as good humans, and be where someone else is at, not where you want them to be. How does someone identifying as transgender affect your life? Please, vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

Tammy Wellbrock-Talley
Private Citizen
tammywtalley@gmail.com
1/26/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Thank the committee members, my name is Tammy Wellbrock-Talley from Salina, and I strongly oppose this bill.

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. Again, my name is Tammy Wellbrock-Talley and I am a voter in Saline County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071. This bill denies Kansans their basic rights to health care, and discriminates on a level that is shamefully against all Christian values. As Christians we must take care of all Christ's flock, not just those who look like we do. Please vote no, and bring Jesus' teachings back to how we live.

Voting no is the only way to vote!!

Once again, I thank you all for listening to my thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote no of the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071.

Warmest regards,
Tammy Wellbrock-Talley



*End discrimination based on
sexual orientation and
gender identity*

Taryn Jones
Policy Director, Equality Kansas
In Opposition to HB 2701
House Committee on Health and Human Services
January 28th, 2025

Good afternoon, Chairman and members of the committee.

My name is Taryn Jones, and I am the lobbyist for Equality Kansas. I am writing to you to oppose HB 2701. I believe this bill to be extremely harmful not only to the trans community, but also to the medical community.

Laws like these are incredibly harmful to doctors. The civil penalty for a doctor with this bill can be 30 years after the child turns 18. This means that someone who received gender affirming care could sue up until they are 48 years old. There is a good chance that this doctor may not be practicing or even alive after 30 years. HB 2701 would also force doctors to get informed consent on any gender transition care. All medications and treatments come with side effects, and we don't make patients sign informed consent for other treatment, why this? Why are doctors being forced to read off a list of all possible side effects? Legislators who are not doctors are not licensed or trained to perform medicine. They should not be telling doctors how to practice or what is best for their patients.

HB 2701 also prevents people who receive state funds from advocating for any gender affirming care and prevents state employees from advocating and providing gender affirming care. While nurses,

doctors and teachers all fall into this. There's another category that also falls into these guidelines. social workers and therapists. While I am the lobbyist for Equality Kansas, I am also a social worker. I can promise you that social workers and therapists will not continue to work if they are put under these limitations. Social workers own code of ethics will not allow this, and they could risk losing their license. Social workers have thankless jobs and often don't get paid well. We do it because we love the work. Can we really afford to lose any more of them? What happens when we don't have case workers at DCF or case managers in our mental health centers? There are already long lists to get into therapy what will happen when there are even less therapists? We can't afford to lose any more providers in our state.

For these reasons and more I am asking you to vote no on HB 2701 The harms to both medical providers, mental health professionals, and trans children would be astronomical if these laws were to go into effect. Please vote no on HB 2701.

Taylor Gaughan MS, LPC
Kansas Senate Bill 63
1/24/25

My name is Taylor Gaughan and I am a Licensed Counseling Psychologist in Lawrence, Kansas. My work as a therapist has allowed me to work with several trans individuals as they identify and process what being trans means to them as well as processing being trans in a world that struggles to accept them. Working with trans individuals has allowed me to see the benefits of gender affirming care on the overall wellbeing and life satisfaction of trans clients. Gender affirming care is necessary for individuals to feel safe, comfortable, and confident in their own bodies.

Through the professional experiences I have had with trans youth as well as their families, I have been able to see the benefits of having access to gender affirming care. Trans adolescents who have access to gender affirming care experience decreases in anxiety, depression, gender dysphoria, PTSD, and suicidality. Trans individuals also experience increases in self compassion, confidence, and quality of life. Gender affirming care is a necessary form of treatment not only medically but mentally. Without access to gender affirming care, it becomes more likely that adolescents will engage in self harm, substance use, and increased suicide attempts.

If the goal of this bill is to protect youth and adolescents, then an absolutely crucial component of the bill needs to be providing access to gender affirming care. Being trans is not a choice and the decision to begin gender affirming care is not one that adolescents or families make lightly. The steps that are currently in place to access gender affirming care ensure that only individuals who need it and would benefit from it are accessing those resources. Removing access to gender affirming care would actively go against the best interest of many adolescents who are just seeking ways to feel safe and seen in their own bodies. Trans youth deserve the right to medical care that will allow them to grow and develop into happy and healthy people.

I appreciate you taking the time to read my testimony and I hope you will consider the impact of this bill on an already vulnerable population.

Taylor Gaughan LPC

Taylor Gaughan, MS, LPC



Testimony of Taylor Morton, Kansas Lobbyist and Policy Analyst (written testimony)
Planned Parenthood Great Plains Votes
4401 W. 109th Street, Suite 200, Overland Park, KS 66211
Regarding HB 2071 (Opponent)
House Committee on Health and Human Services
January 28, 2025

Planned Parenthood Great Plains Votes (“PPGPV”) is the advocacy and political arm of Planned Parenthood Great Plains (“PPGP”). PPGP offers expert, compassionate sexual and reproductive health care to patients with four health center locations in Kansas. PPGPV submits this testimony in opposition to House Bill 2071. HB 2071 would effectively ban gender-affirming care for patients under the age of 18 and threaten medical providers with license revocation for providing best practice medical care. Under HB 2071, patients and their families would lose the right to make the health care decisions that are best for them.

The inability to access gender-affirming care contributes to depression, social isolation, self-hatred, risk of self-harm, and suicidal ideation among transgender and nonbinary youth. Transgender youth are more likely to feel depressed and anxious, harm themselves, or attempt suicide. Transgender and nonbinary youth are 2-2.5 times as likely to experience depressive symptoms, seriously consider suicide, and attempt suicide than their cisgender and LGBTQ+ peers.¹ Simply the introduction of anti-trans legislation like HB 2071 is harmful—with 85% of transgender and nonbinary youth reporting a negative impact on mental health because of the stigmatizing messages of such legislation. A 2022 poll found that 85% of trans and nonbinary youth said their mental health was negatively affected by these laws.²

Access to gender-affirming care—particularly puberty blockers—has been shown to decrease the likelihood of suicide and depression among transgender and nonbinary youth. Furthermore, individuals who are accepted and supported in their gender identity show better mental health and quality of life outcomes.³ Medical and social gender-affirming care are shown to improve mental health outcomes, build self-esteem, and improve overall quality of life for gender diverse youth.⁴ The language of HB 2071 clearly discriminates against transgender Kansans by allowing cisgender youth to access the same health care that transgender youth are barred from. In order to protect and nurture Kansas youth, gender-affirming care must be accessible. Everyone should have the right to make their own medical decisions in consultation with their families and providers—without government interference.

Gender-affirming care is considered medical best practice by most major medical organizations—including the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Medical Association, and American Psychiatric Association, among others.⁵ There is consensus among the medical community that gender-affirming

¹ [https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X\(19\)30922-X/fulltext](https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X(19)30922-X/fulltext)

² <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/blog/new-poll-illustrates-the-impacts-of-social-political-issues-on-lgbtq-youth/>

³ <https://psycnet.apa.org/fulltext/2015-39781-006.html>

⁴ <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpap.2019.05.004>

⁵ American Academy of Pediatrics: <https://publications.aap.org/aapnews/news/25340/AAP-reaffirms-gender-affirming-care-policy?autologincheck=redirected>; American Medical Association: <https://www.ama-assn.org/health-care-advocacy/advocacy-update/march-26-2021-state-advocacy-update>; American Psychiatric Association: <https://www.psychiatry.org/File%20Library/About-APA/Organization-Documents-Policies/Position-Transgender-Gender-Diverse-Youth.pdf>



care for patients under age 18 is medically necessary and safe. HB 2071 creates liability for Kansas health care providers for treating patients in accordance with the standard of care.

Over 70% of Kansas counties are experiencing a physician and/or nurse shortage.⁶ To address this shortage, the Kansas Legislature should equip and empower health care providers, rather than imposing harmful penalties for practicing medicine in accordance with the standard of care. HB 2071 threatens Kansas health care providers who treat patients experiencing gender dysphoria, and makes it harder for them to provide comprehensive, wholistic health care to Kansas youth.

The provisions in HB 2071 are meant to stigmatize transgender Kansans and providers of gender-affirming care. There is no medical basis for banning gender-affirming care for patients under age 18, and the only impact of passing HB 2071 would be harm to patients and providers. Gender-affirming care includes medical and non-medical interventions, and this type of care is lifesaving.

PPGPV strongly urges the Committee to oppose HB 2071.

⁶ <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/charts/5?state=KS>

January 26, 2025

Attention: House Committee on Health and Human Services

Re: House Bill 2071

As a parent of a transgender adolescent, I am deeply concerned with the restrictions that would be placed on her healthcare by the passage of House Bill 2071. I have known that my daughter has demonstrated evidence of gender dysphoria from early childhood. Her gender identity has been affirmed through personal and social behavioral observations, and more recently, by medical diagnosis. Through the help of responsible, caring physicians who have monitored her development for many years, she is now receiving treatment. I am in strong opposition to this bill. The passage of this bill would threaten the health of my daughter.

The American Psychological Association, cites The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), which articulates specifically that “gender nonconformity is not in itself a mental disorder, but rather the distress caused by the body and mind not aligning.” Gender dysphoria is not a choice, but may have a legitimate biological cause that warrants its classification as a medical condition.

The Mayo Mayo Clinic classifies gender dysphoria as a rare condition that results in “severe distress that makes it difficult to handle work, school, social conditions, and other aspects of daily life.” My daughter is happy and is living her best life. The passage of this bill would harm her and other transgender children in countless ways.

Without treatment, gender dysphoria can cause anxiety, depression, eating disorders, thoughts of self-harm, and other mental health concerns. Currently, I have a healthy, happy daughter who relies on the continued interdisciplinary gender-affirming care of her physicians for physical, mental, and social health.

Respectfully,

Tim Nussbaum

Topeka, Kansas

January 26, 2025

Kansas State Capitol
Building 300 SW 10th St.
Topeka, KS 66612

RE: Opposition Testimony to HB 2071 to the House Health and Human Services Committee for hearing on January 28, 2025 by Thomas Torma

Dear Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee,

As I am unable to attend the committee hearing in person, please accept this as my written testimony to express my strong opposition to HB 2071, which seeks to ban life-saving healthcare for transgender youth in Kansas. This legislation deeply concerns me, as it targets an already vulnerable population and undermines established medical standards.

I have witnessed firsthand the positive impact of gender-affirming care on trans youth. Research consistently demonstrates that such care is medically appropriate, safe, and supported by every major medical association in the United States. These treatments provide critical support to young people, improving their mental health and overall well-being. Denying access to this care would cause needless harm and perpetuate the challenges faced by the transgender community, including bullying, ostracism, and mental health struggles.

At a time when Kansans face pressing issues like economic challenges, healthcare access, educational needs, and environmental concerns, I urge you to focus your efforts on initiatives that directly benefit the lives of your constituents. This ongoing attack on the trans community does nothing to address the real priorities of Kansans and serves only to distract from meaningful progress.

In closing, I strongly urge you to oppose HB 2071 and instead advocate for legislation that unites our communities and addresses the challenges we face together. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,



Dr. Thomas Torma
Lawrence, KS
House District 10
Submitted via email on 1/26/25

Written Testimony in opposition to Kansas House Bill 2071
Submitted by Toney Lee Smith II, 2948 ARAPAHO RD, HESTON KS 67062

To respected members of the Kansas House of Representatives:

I am writing this testimony in opposition to House Bill 2071 as US Army veteran, and up stand Kansas and US citizen, and a man who has traveled the world and gotten to know an uncountable number of different people and cultures in my personal and military travels. I have seen first hand what nations are like when they don't have free speech protected and those that let politicians decide over doctors, the appropriate medical care for their people. Furthermore, I can tell you that in either case, it leads to harsh suppression of said peoples as well as much suffering and death due to improper medical care.

I could explain that the medical professionals and social scientists that have done the research and observing of the subject of gender-affirming care know all too well that providing adequate psychological, social, and medical care to youth that have discovered that they are transgender is the best way to provide what the individual needs in order to develop into a healthy and well-adjusted adult, as well as prevents many cases of self harm and suicide for these youths.

I could also go on about how banning a trans pride flag in government buildings or preventing any government employee from speaking of such things is a gross violation of the 1st amendment, as much as would be preventing said employees from having any symbols that supported kids to go to the dentist/floss, advising a child that is harmed to go to a hospital to get an injury checked, or telling a child they should see a therapist for having harmful thoughts. ALL of these cases are blocking of the guidance to professional medical/psychological help that the child *may* require.

I could bring up the point that gender-affirming care doesn't just involve potentially trans kids either. If there is a child that has a hormonal imbalance that is causing some medical issues and a member governmental staff advises the child to seek medical help, two things will arise. 1. Either the government employee wasn't aware of the gender affirming care required and the doctor then provides said care, which leave the employee ignorant, but still in violation of this law (if passed) or 2. The employee knowingly sends the child to get required medical care (that could be life-threatening such as Polycystic ovary syndrome), and then while they saved the child suffering and potential death/debilitation, that employee has violated the law.

I can also bring up that all the gender-affirming care in this case already does not all for surgery under the age of 18 in Kansas law, so the only thing that would be used for treatment would be social and prescribed medicine, all of which have been proven over and over to be safer than Tylenol and all of these are reversible treatments if said patient changes their mind.

But I shouldn't need to bring any of those up, as the real reason this law should be rejected is freedom. I fought and served for the freedom for folk to be able to choose who they want to be and for every kid to get the help they need to live a better life, from schooling, to protection from physical harm, and now to protection from those whom wish to stand in between the child's doctor (or a referral to a doctor for the child). If a child needed help to keep them from jumping off a roof, would you tell a government employee to just not get involved?

Please make the right decision, for Kansas.

Thank you for your time.

Trenna Soderling
private citizen
trennabelle@gmail.com
1/28/0025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 today. I'm Trenna Soderling, a voter in Douglas County. I'm writing today to encourage the committee to vote no.

As a voter and citizen in the Lawrence, Kansas committee, I've seen first-hand how important it is people are given the chance to be themselves. I know that access to gender affirming medical care is key, and I don't think that it's the government's position to block individuals from getting that.

Thanks again for hearing my thoughts on this bill. Please vote no!

Veronica Holtz
PRIVATE CITIZEN
veronicaleeholtz@gmail.com
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Veronica Holtz and I am a voter in Sedgwick County. I am writing you to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071.

Families should have the right to decide what medical care is best for them. Recently, my cousin and his family moved to another country to get the care and support he needed as a trans man. They should have felt safe and supported here in Kansas. This law only makes Kansas less safe for families like theirs.

Thank you for your consideration. Please vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

January 25th, 2025

Re: Opposition to HB 2701 and SB63

Dear Kansas State Senators and Representatives,

My name is Victoria Strafuss of Overland Park, KS in Johnson County. I am a wife, mother, and ally to the LGBTQIA+ community and I am writing to you to voice my opposition to the bills HB2701 and SB63.

HB2701 while on the surface wants advanced voting ballots to be more orderly, at its core it is voter suppression. There is a reason why a 3 day grace period was created for several states and that's due to the fact that USPS has stated that it struggles to keep up. No one knows for sure if you mail a letter to someone when exactly they will receive it. Has the mail created a system that has improved its time and reliability? No. Then there is no reason to take away the three day grace period other than to allow votes to be lost in the mail due to the lack of improvements to our mail system. Democrats tend to use the advance voting ballots more over Republicans and I believe that this knowledge isn't new to some if not all of you.

SB63 should be renamed the harm not help act (the help not harm act actual title) for that's what it would do. Look up any study on the harm of not having gender transition care or gender affirming care and you will see serious mental health issues and in many cases death by suicide. If you claim to love life and care about all lives, then trans lives should be included in this, more so if it's a trans child. Most of us do not identify as trans, myself included. We will never understand what it feels like to be born in the wrong body. But what I and many other know is that not having this care will hurt other human beings. Then there's the health care providers who will not feel safe treating their trans patients when they too know the negative effects of a child not receiving the care they need. Again, the harm spreads to punishing those seeking to help a child. As a mother, I would like to see gender transition care for children stay for Kansas.

I appreciate your time and hope that these bills no not pass.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Victoria Strafuss
8604 west 85th street
Overland Park, KS 66212

Wayne Jennings
PRIVATE CITIZEN
waynejennings49@gmail.com
1/28/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Wayne Jennings and I am a voter in Sedgewick County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 2071"

Dear Mr Hawkins.

I am a constituent of your district and am writing to strongly urge you to VOTE NO on HB2071.

I am a retired mental health worker, parent of a gay youth who has struggled throughout his youth and early adulthood with bullying and persecution due to his differences. I also have gay, trans, (and others who identify as non-binary) friends who have horror stories about bullying and persecution they have had to deal with in their every life endeavors. The term "Gender Disphoria" is never large enough to describe the effects of the soul shaking events they consistently experience.

As a mental health worker for 40 years I can attest to the psychic harm and destruction resulting from the challenges resulting from dealing with the consistent assaults on their humanity. I have worked with survivors of their child's suicide as the result of their inability to secure appropriate mental health services in order to save their sanity and their lives.

No legislator who cares about children and families should ever even consider supporting legislation that would block life affirming and life saving assistance to anyone who identifies as non-binary - especially to children and youth in their most vulnerable and formative years.

Especially troubling is that this bill threatens legal actions against caring agents such as myself who are committed to aiding and assisting children and their families toward mental health and a chance for self acceptance and happiness in their world.

Patients, families, and their doctors should have the freedom to make their own private medical decisions—not politicians. This bill bans life-saving healthcare that is evidence-based, medically necessary, and safe—which is why every major medical association advocates against bills like this.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of my experience and experience on this question as you make your final decision on this bill which will have a disastrous intergenerational impact on many Kansans if it is passed.

Wendy Smith
Private citizen
Surrenderwendy@gmail.com
1/25/2025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

hairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Wendy Smith and im a voter In Douglas County. Im writing you today to encourage the committee to vote no on SB 63 / HB 207

It is well known that gender affirming care is life saving for children. Full stop. It reduces the odds of suicide by an astronomical amount. How can you in good conscience vote for increasing suicides in our youth? By the way, the nazi party, which my grandfather fough against, attacked the trans community first also. Do you align with the Nazi party?

Once again, I thank you all for hearing my story and thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote no of the passage of SB 63 / HB 2071. Thank you.

01/24/2025

Written Testimony Opposing House Bill 2071

I am Wren Porcaro, I am non-binary, and I am writing to oppose House Bill 2071.

While I am no longer a minor, as someone who knows the experience of a minor navigating transgender healthcare here in Kansas—both through myself and my brother Damien—I believe I am able to effectively advocate for my peers who are still minors, including my brother and my friends at school.

This bill simply goes too far. Many transgender children discover a discrepancy between their perceived gender and assigned gender at birth some time before the age of puberty, at which point potentially unwanted characteristics may develop. By banning treatments which are easily reversible, or which have few or no permanent effects, such as puberty blockers and hormone replacement therapy, you are putting transgender children at risk.

The fact is: transgender children are at a higher risk of suicide and mental health issues than their cisgender peers, due to many factors. One of these factors, gender dysphoria, has an extremely powerful negative effect on the brain, and it is not an effect that I or any other transgender child can simply choose to ignore; at least, not for long. It's an effect that's brought me much too close to killing myself more times than it should have, which to be clear, is **zero times**.

Preventing professionals from safely treating this diagnosable issue, even with parental consent, may put some children at risk of using “do-it-yourself”, or “DIY”, treatments. These treatments include buying medicines—potentially illegally—and using them, which carries a wide variety of physical, financial, and legal risks.

Even further, this bill goes to ban the advocacy of social transition for minors by state officials or using state properties. This is a problem for one simple reason: social transition is potentially the *least* invasive and *least* permanent way to help ease gender dysphoria. The only reason I see to oppose social transition in this way is to fulfill a wish to limit people's free expression. This, I feel, is blatantly against the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and the purpose of our free society in America.

There's a simple question you need to ask when you vote on this bill: how many transgender children will this kill? If that number is more than zero and you still vote in support

of it, I could not, in good conscience, support you as a constituent. And I believe that number is more than zero, so I urge you to vote against House Bill 2071.

Thank you,

Wren Porcaro

Jordan Berry, LCSW
on behalf of myself
jordan@threemountainstherapy.com
1/28/0025

For both SB 63 and HB 2071
Opponent
Written only

Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 63 / HB 2071 with you today. My name is Jordan Berry and I am a new voter in Johnson County. I am writing today to strongly encourage the committee to vote no on HB 2071

As a clinical social worker and a voter in Johnson County, I have seen the vital role that social affirmation and access to gender-affirming medical care, including hormonal treatment and/or surgery, play in supporting the normative development of transgender and gender-expansive youth.

Gender-affirming care, including social affirmation and medically appropriate interventions, is essential in fostering healthy identity development and emotional well-being. Social affirmation—such as the use of correct names and pronouns—provides transgender youth with the confidence to engage in their world authentically. Without this support, they face a unique kind of bullying from peers, characterized by persistent misgendering, exclusion, and verbal harassment. This daily stress not only erodes their self-esteem but also contributes to increased anxiety, depression, and suicidality with lifelong impacts. Access to gender-affirming care serves as a critical buffer, offering these youth the stability and support necessary to navigate these challenges and develop resilience.

Additionally, hormonal treatments and, when appropriate, surgical interventions, support normal adolescent development by aligning physical characteristics with gender identity. These medical interventions are based on years of rigorous research and are endorsed by major medical organizations (the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association, the Endocrine Society, the World Professional Association for Transgender Health, the American College of Physicians, the Pediatric Endocrine Society, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and the National Association of Social Workers, among others) as safe and effective. For many transgender youth, gender-affirming care is essential in reducing gender dysphoria—not as a result of trauma or mental illness, but due to the distress caused by the misalignment between their gender identity and their assigned sex at birth, as well as the prejudice and discrimination they face because of this misalignment. Access to affirming care improves mental health and supports their ability to engage fully in their lives. Without access to medically necessary treatment, transgender youth face heightened vulnerability to isolation, discrimination, and adverse mental health outcomes.

Imagine, as a parent, having carefully considered every healthcare option, consulted with trusted healthcare professionals, and decided—alongside your child—on the best path forward for their health and happiness, only to have the government step in and tell you that your decision is not allowed. Your child, who comes home every day tearful, telling you about classmates who mock them, call them by the wrong name and pronouns, and threaten to “out” them before they are ready. They speak in hushed tones about their fear of being cornered in the hallways, of being physically harmed, of feeling like they will never be accepted for who they truly are. You see their anxiety growing, their confidence slipping, and their once joyful personality dimming under the weight of relentless bullying. You know that gender-affirming care—including both medical and surgical options—could provide them with the tools and affirmation they need to feel safe, confident, and secure in their identity—yet the government stands in the way, denying your family the ability to make medically supported, evidence-based decisions that could quite literally save your child’s life.

Medical decisions should remain between families and their healthcare providers, not dictated by legislation. As a Johnson County voter, I urge you to oppose SB 63 and HB 2071 to ensure that transgender and gender-expansive youth in Kansas continue to receive the affirming, developmentally appropriate care they need to live healthy, authentic lives.

Thank you all for hearing my concerns and thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote no of the passage of HB 2071. For any members of the House who are Christians, please keep in mind the verse from Matthew 25:40 where Jesus said: "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it for me." Thank you.