

Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

SB12

Proponent Testimony

February 9, 2023

Dear Honorable Chairwoman Gossage and Members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee,

I strongly urge your support of Senate Bill 12. This is needed as it is known that the human brain is not fully developed before the age of 25 years, and any individual under the age of 21 is therefore unable to make a full and informed decision on an issue like gender reassignment surgery which will affect the individual for life.

An interview with Sandra Aamodt, PhD in neuroscience and co-author of the book "Welcome to Your Child's Brain: How the Mind Grows from Conception to College" (2012) was interviewed by NPR in the following article:

*Brain Maturity Extends Well Beyond Teen Years*

<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=141164708>

and the following quotes from that interview are relevant with respect to SB 12.

"brain scans show clearly that the brain is not fully finished developing until about age 25."

"the changes that happen between 18 and 25 are a continuation of the process that starts around puberty, and 18 year olds are about halfway through that process. Their prefrontal cortex is not yet fully developed. That's the part of the brain that helps you to inhibit impulses and to plan and organize your behavior to reach a goal."

"And the other part of the brain that is different in adolescence is that the brain's reward system becomes highly active right around the time of puberty and then gradually goes back to an adult level, which it reaches around age 25"

"...one of the side effects of these changes in the reward system is that adolescents and young adults become much more sensitive to peer pressure than they were earlier or will be as adults."

This is but one source of many other scientifically accepted references for child development.

Given this, I would appreciate your support of Senate Bill 12.

Sincerely,

Mei Upsdell

Senate District 10