

Stop Bans on Gender-Affirming Health Care

[HB 419](#) (Hudson) | [HB 463](#) (Boyd) | [HB 540](#) (Sparks)
[SB 49](#) (Moon) | [SB 236](#) (Hoskins) | [SB 281](#) (Eigel)

Like everyone, transgender and non-binary Missourians must have access to the care they need to thrive. Bills that would ban trans and non-binary young people's access to lifesaving, gender-affirming care put these young people's health and wellbeing at risk, and criminalize health care providers for following evidence-based best practices.

Bans on gender-affirming care harm trans and non-binary Missourians.

Bills that ban gender-affirming care target young people, their parents, and their clinicians, and some versions extend restrictions to transgender and non-binary Missourians of all ages.

Provisions in these bills include:

- Banning providing, referring for, and “aiding and abetting” the broadly-defined “gender transition procedures,” for people under 18.
- Gagging health care professionals from counseling, support, and referrals related to gender affirming care and gender transition.
- Prohibiting gender transition procedures for people under 18 at state, county, or local government facilities and prohibiting state, county, or local government employed health care professionals from providing gender-affirming care to people under 18.
- Targeting access and affordability of gender-affirming care by deploying punitive public funding restrictions on providers of gender-affirming care, and banning insurance coverage and health plan reimbursement for gender affirming care for those under 18.
- Banning and curtailing gender affirming care for adults, including a committee substitute to deny gender-affirming care to incarcerated Missourians, and denying insurance coverage of gender-affirming care.

Attacks on LGBTQ+ Missourians are straight out of the anti-abortion playbook.

Attacks against LGBTQ rights and dignity are coming from the very same politicians and far-right actors who enacted abortion bans. We know that LGBTQ rights and reproductive rights are intertwined — both arise from our fundamental right to control our own bodies and build the families we choose.

Gender-affirming care saves lives.

- When transgender and non-binary young people have the medical care and support they need, it improves their health and wellbeing, and enables them to thrive.^{1, 2, 3, 4, 5}
- Denying trans and non-binary Missourians support and health care puts them at risk of serious harms, including depression, social isolation, self-harm, and suicidality.^{6, 7}

- Transgender folks *already* face pervasive mistreatment and violence, marginalization, and discrimination⁸ — legislative attacks on the care and support they need to thrive both physically and emotionally further threaten their health and lives.

Gender-affirming care is evidence-based and the standard of care.

- Every major medical organization supports access to gender-affirming care following well-established clinical guidelines that are based on empirical evidence.^{9, 10}
- As with all medical treatment, medical guidelines provide that each patient undergoes the informed-consent process and receives appropriate care, information, and support that are tailored to their individual needs.

This legislation is dangerous interference in the patient-clinician relationship.

- As with all health care, there is no place for politicians in decisions about gender-affirming care.
- This legislation would force providers to deny their patients lifesaving care and information and go against the standard of care—a violation of their professional ethics.
- Bans on gender-affirming care would also deprive parents from supporting the medical decisions that are best for their children and families.

Planned Parenthood health center clinicians, staff, and educators see every day the life-giving impact of inclusive, gender-affirming health care. Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region and Southwest Missouri's TRANSforming Community, TRANSforming Care program provides gender-affirming care, education, and support, which allows people to lead authentic lives. These services involve a wide range of sexual and reproductive health care tailored to the patient's needs, as well as gender-affirming hormone therapy. Since starting nearly two years ago, the program has served more than 3,000 trans and non-binary patient visits.

We should all agree that all Missourians must have access to evidence-based health care, no matter their gender identity and be able to see their doctor without fear of interference, discrimination, or retaliation from politicians. Parents and clinicians must be able to support and affirm young people so that they can live healthy lives.

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Endnotes

¹See Major Health, Education, and Child Welfare Organizations Oppose Anti-LGBTQ State-Based Legislation, Am. Acad. of Pediatrics (Mar. 5, 2021), <https://services.aap.org/en/newsroom/news-releases/aap/2021/major-health-education-and-child-welfare-organizations-opposeanti-lgbtq-state-based-legislation/>

²The Pediatric Endocrine Society Opposes Bills that Harm Transgender Youth, Pediatric Endocrine Soc'y (Apr. 2021), <https://pedsendo.org/news-announcements/the-pediatricendocrine-society-opposes-bills-that-harm-transgender-youth>

[h-2/](#); see also Endocrine Society condemns efforts to block access to medical care for transgender youth, Endocrine Soc'y (Apr. 2021),

<https://www.endocrine.org/news-and-advocacy/news-room/2021/endocrine-societycondemns-efforts-to-block-access-to-medical-care-for-transgender-youth>

³Simona Martin et al., Criminalization of Gender-Affirming Care-Interfering with Essential Treatment for Transgender Children and Adolescents, New Eng. J. Med. (2021), <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp2106314>

⁴The Pediatric Endocrine Society Opposes Bills that Harm Transgender Youth, Pediatric Endocrine Soc'y (Apr. 2021), <https://pedsendo.org/news-announcements/the-pediatricendocrine-society-opposes-bills-that-harm-transgender-youth>

[h-2/](#); see also Endocrine Society condemns efforts to block access to medical care for transgender youth, Endocrine Soc'y (Apr. 2021),

<https://www.endocrine.org/news-and-advocacy/news-room/2021/endocrine-societycondemns-efforts-to-block-access-to-medical-care-for-transgender-youth>

⁵ American Medical Association Issue Brief, Health Insurance Coverage for Gender Affirming Care of Transgender Patients (March 2021) at <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2019-03/transgender-coverage-issue-brief.pdf>

⁶ M. Hassan Murad, et al., Hormonal Therapy and Sex Reassignment: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Quality of Life and Psychosocial Outcomes, 72 Clinical Endocrinology 214 (Feb. 2010)

⁷ Jack K. Turban et al., Pubertal Suppression for Transgender Youth and Risk of Suicidal Ideation, 145(2) Pediatrics e20191725 (Feb. 2020), <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/145/2/e20191725>

⁸ Michelle M. Johns et al., Transgender identity and experiences of violence victimization, substance use, suicide risk, and sexual risk behaviors among high school students-19 states and large urban school districts, 2017, US Dep't of Health and Human Servs., Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 68(3) MMWR 67 (Jan. 25, 2019),

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/wr/pdfs/mm6803a3-H.pdf>

⁹ These organizations include the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association, the American Osteopathic Association, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and more. See, for example, BRIEF OF AMICI CURIAE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS AND ADDITIONAL NATIONAL AND STATE MEDICAL, MENTAL HEALTH, AND EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' MOTION FOR PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION in *Brandt et al v. Rutledge et al.*

¹⁰ Joint statement of the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American College of Physicians, the American Osteopathic Association, and the American Psychiatric Association, *Frontline Physicians Oppose Legislation That Interferes in or Penalizes Patient Care* (April 2021) at

<https://www.aafp.org/dam/AAFP/documents/advocacy/prevention/equality/STG6-FrontlinePhysiciansOpposeLegislatiOnThatInterferesInOrPenalizesPatientCare-040221.pdf>