

Judiciary and Public Safety Committee
Chair: Senator Ron Latz

SF63

Friday February 9th, 2023, at 10am, Senate Building 1200

IN SUPPORT

I am a Master of Public Health student and Minnesota resident writing in support of MN Senate files SF63. Transgender and gender expansive people face persecution for seeking lifesaving gender affirming care, perpetuating existing barriers to healthcare, and negatively impacting health outcomes among this already vulnerable population, their families, and support systems.

I'm conducting a Health Impact Assessment of SF63, and its House counterpart, HF146. We have identified the states from which youth are most likely to seek gender affirming care in Minnesota: Texas, Florida, Iowa, South Dakota, and North Dakota. This is 16% of the transgender population in the US ages 13-17 and they can't be ignored any longer.¹

Transgender youth have higher rates of depression, eating disorders, self-harm, and suicidal thoughts and behaviors.^{2,3} Additionally, anti LBGQTQ+ legislation, even when the outcome is favorable, harms the mental health of LBGQTQ+ people.⁴

Research indicates that gender affirming care leads to a decreased likelihood of mood or anxiety problems, psychological distress, and suicide ideation.⁵⁻⁹ This positive impact happens within 12 months of getting gender affirming care.⁵ Earlier access to gender affirming care has been proven to lead to better baseline mental health and sense of well-being—a reason to support access to earlier medically appropriated intervention.^{8,10}

Minnesota is home to top healthcare systems and providers. Not only would our state benefit economically from becoming a safe place to seek this life saving care, doing so aligns with our values. Thank you for protecting our future generation, the LBGQTQ+ community, and their families support systems.

Sincerely,
Meghan Ford
Master of Public Health Candidate, University of Minnesota School of Public Health

References:¹thisisloyal.com Lj. How Many Adults and Youth Identify as Transgender in the United States? Williams Institute. Accessed October 31, 2022. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/trans-adults-united-states/>²Shanker A, ed. *Bodies and Barriers: Queer Activists on Health*. PM Press; 2020.³2022 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health. The Trevor Project. Accessed December 5, 2022. <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2022/>⁴Horne SG, McGinley M, Yel N, Maroney MR. The stench of bathroom bills and anti-transgender legislation: Anxiety and depression among transgender, nonbinary, and cisgender LGBQ people during a state referendum. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. 2022;69(1):1-13. doi:10.1037/cou0000558 ⁵Tordoff DM, Wanta JW, Collin A, Stepney C, Inwards-Breland DJ, Ahrens K. Mental Health Outcomes in Transgender and Nonbinary Youths Receiving Gender-Affirming Care. *JAMA Network Open*. 2022;5(2):e220978. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.0978 ⁶Lett E, Abrams MP, Gold A, Fullerton FA, Everhart A. Ethnoracial inequities in access to gender-affirming mental health care and psychological distress among transgender adults. *Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol*. 2022;57(5):963-971. doi:10.1007/s00127-022-02246-6 ⁷Strenth CR, Pagels P, SoRelle JA, et al. Predictors of mood or anxiety problems among transgender individuals seeking hormone therapy. *Fam Pract*. Published online October 17, 2022:cmac111. doi:10.1093/fampra/cmac111 ⁸Lee JY, Rosenthal SM. Gender-Affirming Care of Transgender and Gender-Diverse Youth: Current Concepts. *Annu Rev Med*. Published online October 19, 2022. doi:10.1146/annurev-med-043021-032007⁹Rosenthal SM. Challenges in the care of transgender and gender-diverse youth: an endocrinologist's view. *Nat Rev Endocrinol*. 2021;17(10):581-591. doi:10.1038/s41574-021-00535-9¹⁰Staples JM, Bird ER, Gregg JJ, George W. Improving the Gender-Affirmation Process for Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Individuals: Associations Among Time Since Transition Began, Body Satisfaction, and Sexual Distress. *J Sex Res*. 2020;57(3):375-383. doi:10.1080/00224499.2019.1617829