



BROWN
Alpert Medical School

Division of Pediatric Urology
2 Dudley Street, Suite 185
Providence, RI 02905
(401) 421-0710, x1311
(401) 421-0720
hwu6@lifespan.org

Hsi-Yang Wu, MD
Associate Professor of Surgery
Director, Pediatric Urology
Hasbro Children's Hospital

April 12, 2021

Dear Representatives,

I am the current Director of Pediatric Urology at Hasbro Children's Hospital. I am writing to OPPOSE House Bill 6171 as written for 2 reasons: First, the intersex procedures targeted in the bill have not been performed in Rhode Island for the past 5 years. Second, the bill prevents us from offering appropriate care to a group of non-intersex boys, who do not have an increased rate of gender identity problems.

Clitoroplasty and vaginoplasty are procedures carried out on patients with Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia, who fall into the intersex category. Due to changes in how we manage these children via our multidisciplinary clinic, we have performed ZERO clitoroplasties or vaginoplasties for Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia at Hasbro Children's Hospital in the past 5 years.

The largest group of surgeries targeted for prohibition is "any procedure that lengthens or reroutes a urethra from its native orifice". The urethra is the tube that carries urine out from the bladder, and the condition where the urethra does not come out to the tip of the penis in a boy is hypospadias, which occurs in 1% of males. Boys with isolated hypospadias are not considered by the medical community to be intersex. We perform these surgeries to improve the function of the penis, so that the boys can stand to urinate, using extra foreskin to reconstruct the urethra, and we straighten the penis to allow for intercourse and to improve fertility. Surgery between 6 and 18 months of age provides better results, compared to surgery after age 12 years. Eliminating the choice for surgical correction of hypospadias would also mean that boys with hypospadias born into families whose religious traditions include circumcision would not be able to be circumcised until age 12, unless the family were willing to undertake a more complicated reconstruction with skin grafts later in life.

Implementation of this bill as it is currently written would restrict surgery for a group of non-intersex boys, rather than the intersex population that it seeks to protect.

Thank you for considering these effects of the bill,

Hsi-Yang Wu, MD