

March 28, 2023

Dear Members of the House Education Committee,

We oppose bills H5688, H5739, and H5859.

Censorship denies people, especially young marginalized people of the LGBTQ community, their rights of religious, sexual and cultural freedoms. It is racist, unconstitutional and follows communist mentality. Removing individual's freedoms is unethical and perpetuates hate towards those that are "nonconforming". Yet, who determines who is nonconforming and why not embrace and support peoples' individuality. Our youth need to learn about accepting and embracing differences and celebrating diversity and appreciating different cultures, religions and sexual identities. This required our youth to be educated in schools, on sports teams, in their communities, and within their families. Providing education and information is critical for children to embrace our differences and appreciate our individuality as a human race, which has no place in it for hatred.

The 2022 president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Moira Szilagyi, MD, PhD, FAAP, made this powerful statement:

"The emotional and psychological trauma of rejection, whether by family, friends, society, or lawmakers, can leave scars that never heal. When we fail to accept people for who they are, we pass painful judgements on them and create so much unnecessary emotional and psychological pain.

I cannot tell you how many similar conversations I have had over the years with young LGBTQ+ patients. They are all, just like any teen, trying to find their way in life. Our duty to them as doctors is to support them on that journey--to help them become the best person they can be. This is the approach our gender-affirming care policy is grounded in...

The people who suffer the most from this discrimination are of course the children and teens just trying to live their lives as their true selves. Pediatricians will not stay silent as these lies are waged against our patients and our peers.

I am proud to lead the American Academy of Pediatrics...and proud to support all children."

<https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/aap-voices/why-we-stand-up-for-transgender-children-and-teens/>

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael Quas and Sydney Montstream-Quas, Barrington