

April 9, 2024

## I AM WRITING IN FULL SUPPORT OF RHODE ISLAND'S CHILDREN DESERVE HELP NOT HARM ACT

This act would safeguard Rhode Island's minors by prohibiting gender transition procedures, the use of public funds for such procedures, and disciplinary action against healthcare providers offering transgender treatments. It also establishes a thirty-year statute of limitation and grants the right to civil action for damages.

Activist educators and healthcare workers, driven more by ideology than by genuine concern for well-being, are targeting our children. These are kids who are already struggling - with their mental health, their self-image, and often, their family situations. And instead of offering real, proven therapeutic interventions, these ideologues offer a dangerous and deceitful promise: that all their problems can simply be medicated or surgically cut away. It's a lie, and it's one that's being sold to them without the consent, and often without the knowledge, of their parents. This cannot be the path we allow our state and country to continue down.

Several countries, including Norway, Sweden, France, Finland, and England, have already banned puberty blockers due to their severe health risks. These drugs cause sexual dysfunction, infertility, cancers, liver, heart and vascular disease, osteoporosis, psychiatric disorders and other complications. The lifelong medicalization of our children brings with it a lifetime of suffering.

Studies, including a comprehensive 15 year long one from the Netherlands, show that 96% of children outgrow their gender dysphoria by their mid-twenties without these interventions. Why then are we rushing to medicalize their confusion, pushing them down a path of irreversible harm?

This bill is not anti-trans; it's pro-child. It's about recognizing that children cannot, and do not, have the capacity to give informed consent to life-altering medical procedures. It's about protecting them until they are of an age where they can make these decisions with a full understanding of the consequences. This is about common sense, about protecting our children from a harmful ideology that has no place in medicine or in our schools.

Children look to their parents and other responsible adults to protect them and help them grow up healthy. Let's accept that responsibility and pass this bill to protect them!

Sincerely,

Lori E. Wycall

125 Winnapaug Road

Westerly, RI 02891

(401) 714-2160