

To whom it may concern:

I submit this letter in two capacities. First, as the parent of a daughter who identified as male for several years and, second, as the coordinator for almost 10 years of a support group for Connecticut and Rhode Island parents of children with “gender distress.”

As to my personal experience, my daughter, who was and is lesbian in sexual orientation, began to identify as a “transgender male” in her last year of college. While she was a tomboy as a young girl, she never expressed any wish to be a man or a boy during the entire period prior to her late college years. We were very surprised by this declaration and primarily worried about the impact that physical “transition medicine” might have. Our daughter has always enjoyed robust good health and in fact competed in college in DIII sports, achieving a trip to the national championships during her junior year.

While we struggled to remain sympathetic and kind to our daughter, we also came to understand that she was surrounded by peers who urged her to disown us, which she in fact did about three years after “claiming” her “male identity.” After this time, she received testosterone (based on a short visit with Planned Parenthood) and breast surgery. She also changed her name legally.

Our daughter did not contact us for almost two years. Apparently, however, she became concerned because her “physicians” had begun to recommend even more radical surgical interventions, namely a full hysterectomy. Coupled with the fact that the hormones made her feel ill and unwell, our daughter ultimately came to see that her doctors were not acting in her best interests and, further, that she was unlikely ever to achieve the goal of “passing” in society as a male. Ultimately, our daughter decided to reconcile with us and to abandon her dream of “being a man,” as pointless, exhausting, and futile. She has communicated that a healthy percentage of the other women who adopted a “trans identity” at the same time, have also “walked away” from the notion. Unsurprisingly, our daughter never re-visited her original clinic and would not be counted as a “detransitioner.” Her clinic never followed up once.

During my daughter’s many years of trans identification, I was offered the opportunity to, and did, become a support group leader for parents who were concerned about their children’s assertion of a transgender “identity.” Over the years, approximately 70 parents have joined the support group, from all areas of both states and with children ranging in age from 12 to 38. As is common with support groups, parents tend to utilize the group when they are in urgent need, and when their children move on, they do not stay connected to the group. At this point, most of the parents have adult children who have become entrenched in a “trans identity” and who are undergoing medical procedures. Some, but not all, of these parents are estranged from their adult children. The group provides a safe place where parents can express their concerns and share in

the face of an extremely hostile and professionally and personally dangerous environment.

The support group parents reflect a rich cross-section of Rhode Island and Connecticut citizens. They are professionals (doctors, lawyers, accountants), educators (secondary and college), skilled tradespeople, insurance and other white-collar workers, military, non-profit workers and homemakers. Parents fall on all sides of the political spectrum; some are members of organized religious groups (Christian, Jewish) and some are not affiliated with any religious group. What all parents share is their grave concern about, first, their children's choices and, second, the environments in which their children learn about these choices.

Due to so-called "conversion therapy" laws, none of our parents have been able to obtain competent therapy for their children that does not automatically affirm the "trans identity." Several of the children have serious mental health problems that cannot be addressed without conceding the child's opposite sex identity.

Many of our parents have children that were "socially transitioned" in secret in their schools. Some of our parents have experienced intervention from the Connecticut Department of Children and Families when they have refused to support medical procedures for their minor children. Some of our parents (those involved in divorce or custody proceedings) have had courts rule against them, again for declining to facilitate social or medical transition for their minor children. Many of our parents have experienced enormous pressure from the "helping professionals" who interact with their children, namely teachers, counselors, pediatricians, mental health workers, and even law enforcement personnel.

I can confidently speak for all of the parents in our support group when I state that expanding access to "gender procedures" and becoming a "sanctuary state" for people who wish to provide them is going in exactly the wrong direction for Connecticut. We have all witnessed, first-hand, just how ruinous wrong-sex gender identification is for our children, and our profound hope is that this pernicious ideology will soon become a relic of the past. As parents, the last thing that we want is for more children and families to be affected as we have been.