

Good morning to the members of the Assembly Committee on Judiciary. I am Abigail Swetz, my pronouns are she/her, and I am the executive director of Fair Wisconsin, Wisconsin's only statewide LGBTQ+ civil rights and political advocacy organization. I am here to speak in opposition to Assembly Bill 400.

I am queer, and a leader in the LGBTQ+ community, but as a cisgender person, I have never transitioned. At the same time, I know trans kids deserve the freedom to be themselves and receive the medical care they need. In fact, we should all be free from politicians using our identities and our medical care to score political points.

I make medical appointments and follow my provider's directions, precisely because I am not a doctor, and they are who know both the standards of care and me, their individual patient. This legislative body is also not a doctor consulting an individual patient about medical decisions, but there are quite a few doctors and medical professionals who can speak to the standards of care for trans youth and how this care is highly-individualized when they provide it, like all quality medical care. I urge this legislature to leave the medical decisions to the medical professionals, and not give that power to politicians. Medical care should be discussed and decided by medical providers, the young person receiving treatment, and their parents. Again, respecting the privacy and autonomy of that medical decision-making process is not unique to trans people but rather should be true for all of us.

Protecting access to gender-affirming care for trans youth also helps protect access to these treatments for all. Research shows that rates of regret for youth gender-affirming care are incredibly low (between 0.2% and 5%), which is far lower than other medical treatments (such as 30% after a prostatectomy or 18% after joint replacement surgery). As the daughter of a father who has had both those surgeries recently, I have seen that regret play out in his individual experience. No one is served by trying to make this care more difficult to access for everyone. That does not honor the experiences of trans patients and the families who support them, nor does it respect the expertise of the medical professionals who provide this care.

I'm an educator who knows the value of research, investigation, and listening to the experts, but I'm not a researcher myself. That is why I look to the scientists and professional associations that do rigorous research. In examining the research, I also learn that every legitimate major medical association supports gender-affirming care. I urge you to consult the report from the Utah Department of Health and Human Services that was submitted to the Utah Legislature in May of 2025. I provided a copy of the report in the hearing for SB 405. It is a rigorous, systematic review of evidence, and it demonstrates that gender-affirming care for youth is safe and effective, and that restrictions on this health care for trans youth are not justifiable based on evidence. It also will serve to refute the inaccuracies that can be found in this bill.

Frankly, however you may feel about lawyers and lawsuits, the fact is that Wisconsin already has a medical malpractice law, and that law already has a special provision to extend the



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time to bring a lawsuit when the patient is a child. Medical malpractice statutes have already determined when and how much patients can recover in those situations. We do not need a new law here.

Gender-affirming care for transgender youth is medically necessary care, just like the kids who receive it - and all kids - are necessary. It is age-appropriate, just as it is appropriate to believe someone at any age when they tell you they know who they are and how they want to live, a perspective backed by rigorous scientific evidence. For young people, it is accessed with informed consent of the patient and their parents. It is individualized, just like the young people who receive it are, themselves, unique individuals. And it is high-quality, just like the bright future this state has ahead of us when all our children thrive. Young people and their families deserve to know it is within their power to continue to access this medically necessary care without anyone else - especially politicians - injecting themselves into their medical decisions. All these young people want - and all their families and providers want for them - is for them to be able to thrive and live in a body that feels like home. I think we can all understand that; that desire is universal, too.

The reality is this: we must protect access to youth gender-affirming care because this medically necessary health care makes it possible for trans kids to grow into awesome adults. You're meeting some of them today, too. Wisconsin is a better, richer, more beautiful place thanks to these amazing kids, and the least we can do is ensure they can grow into thriving adults who will enrich our state. We should all be so lucky for them to continue to call Wisconsin home. Vote *no* on Assembly Bill 400.