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June 19, 2023

Dear California Senators,

I am Dr. Laura Haynes, California psychologist and Board Member and USA Country Representative writing for the International Federation for Therapeutic and Counselling Choice that serves professionals in California and about 27 nations.

We urge you to vote NO on AB 665 as amended.

AB 665 will allow children to be taken from parents if parents do not affirm their child's discordant gender identity, even if there was no evidence of abuse and even with or without the parents' knowledge.

AB 665 is based on a view that it is a scientific fact that gender affirmation prevents suicides. This is false. Please consider the evidence.

1. **Suicidality and mental health problems usually *exist at high rates BEFORE* onset of gender discordance. Therefore suicidality may *contribute to causing* gender discordance. Suicidality that *pre-exists* gender discordance logically cannot be caused by failure to affirm gender discordance.**

- California and Georgia: An 8 year study conducted on 8.8 million subscribers to the Kaiser-Permanente health maintenance organization found that 71% to 75% of adolescents, ages 10-17, who identified as gender non congruent had psychiatric conditions and suicidality—at very high rates in their lifetime and 6 months BEFORE onset of gender non congruence.¹
- Finland: Research on all adolescents in one of 2 adolescent gender clinics over 2 years found:²

- **75% had psychiatric conditions, commonly SEVERE and commonly starting BEFORE adolescent gender dysphoria, SELDOM AFTER.**
 - **“...the vast majority suffered significant psychopathology and broader identity confusion than gender identity issues alone. (p. 7)**
2. **Most parents who do not affirm their child’s non congruent gender identity are liberal and affirm LGBT rights. They just think there is something more going on for their child** that is leading to their child’s gender distress.^{3 4} They may be right! Don’t take their children away. (Littman, Diaz & Bailey)
 3. **Giving gender affirming drugs (puberty blockers, cross sex hormones) to adolescents achieved modest to no improvements in outcomes and 2 suicides.** This was in a United States, 2-year study of 315 recruited gender distressed youths from 4 hospital gender clinics..⁵
 4. **For adolescents who received gender affirming drugs, mental health problems and suicidal ideation and attempts got worse.** This was in an 8.5 year study with comparison groups researching all 3,754 gender non congruent youths in U.S. Military families domestic and abroad.⁶
 5. **Liberal nations that were leaders in gender affirming treatment:⁷**
 - **Are now moving away from the gender affirming approach for minors, calling it scientifically unsupported and experimental.** Nations moving away include: Sweden, Finland, Norway, England, France, Italy, Australia, and New Zealand. Health authorities in America and California are outliers. World-wide, there is not a professional consensus that supports taking kids away from parents for lack of gender affirmation.
 - **Are saying incongruent gender identity may reflect the temporary search for identity typical of the developmental state of adolescence and may subside.** Affirming every gender discordant child will lead to wrong diagnoses, wrong treatments, and regrets.
 6. **American and California health authorities that promote affirmation of discordant gender identity with minimal questioning are outliers.**

7. California young people coming of age are suing Kaiser for wrongful gender affirmation.^{8 9} Regret is real.

These children need their parents!

Please, vote no on AB 665.

Sincerely, Laura Haynes, Ph.D., California Psychologist,
Board Member and USA Country Representative, International Federation for
Therapeutic and Counselling Choice (iftcc.org)

References:

¹ Becerra-Culqui T.A. et al. (2018). Mental health of transgender and gender nonconforming youth compared with their peers. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2017-3845>

² Kaltiala-Heino et al. (2015). Two years of gender identity service for minors: Overrepresentation of natal girls with severe problems in adolescent development. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13034-015-0042-y>

³ Littman L (2018) Rapid-onset gender dysphoria in adolescents and young adults: A study of parental reports. See Table 1. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327065646_Rapid-onset_gender_dysphoria_in_adolescents_and_young_adults_A_study_of_parental_reports

⁴ Diaz, S. & Bailey, J.M. (2023). Rapid onset gender dysphoria: Parent reports on 1655 possible cases. *Archives of sexual behavior*. See Table 1. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-023-02576-9> Marked “retracted” due to activist pressure, while continues to be published with maximum access. Academics and professionals have protested this caving to activist pressure.

⁵ Chen, D., Berona, J., Chan, Y., Ehrensaft, D., Garofalo, R., Hidalgo, M.A., Rosenthal, S.M., Tishelman, A.C., & Olson-Kennedy, J. (2023). Psychosocial functioning in transgender youth after 2 years of hormones. <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2206297>

⁶ Hisle-Gorman et al. (2021). Mental healthcare utilization of transgender youth before and after affirming treatment. See abstract, pp. 1447-1448. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34247956/>

⁷ Haynes, L. (June 14, 2023). <https://archive.iftcc.org/ab-957-opposed-for-california/>

⁸Chole Cole vs. Kaiser Permanente. (Nov. 9, 2022). <https://www.dhillonlaw.com/lawsuits/chloe-cole-v-kaiser-permanente/>

⁹ Hammer, A. (June 18, 2023; updated June 19, 2023). Lawyer for detransitioning woman, 18 who had surgery aged 13 slams doctors at Kaiser Permanente - and says kids should be informed they could outgrow their gender dysphoria. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12208161/Lawyer-detransitioning-woman-18-surgery-aged-12-slams-doctors-mutilating-kids.html>