

Submitter: Elizabeth Hummel

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2458

Dear Oregon Legislators,

Please take a step back from your political commitments and examine what this bill is asking you to do. It is asking you for force therapists to throw out best practices. They have been trained to help people to examine reasons for mental distress. They do this by gently probing, asking questions, helping them to get to the root causes of their discomfort or mental anguish. They are not supposed to impose a viewpoint on their patients, nor are they supposed to blindly affirm a patient's self-diagnosis. Why should gender dysphoria be treated differently than every other condition? Why is this the one condition that therapists should not question but accept as an untouchable revelation of an internal, unchangeable reality?

Gender dysphoria is a real condition, and it can be seriously painful and disrupting to normal life. A wide range of things can contribute to it, including sexual abuse, autism, anxiety, depression, and same-sex attraction. Gender activists will say that the gender dysphoria is what causes these conditions, but evidence shows that the reverse is true. Under the previous protocol of watchful waiting and exploratory therapy, many people's gender dysphoria resolved, as they dealt with its underlying causes, in many cases coming to accept themselves as gay.

It is the job of ethical therapists to follow best practices and help their patients explore all of their mental distress, without any ideological commitment determining the outcome. Please allow therapists to do their job. Please vote "no" on HB 2458.

Thank you.

Elizabeth Hummel