

Submitter: Rory Heath

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2458

To whom it may concern,

My name is Rory Heath and I live outside of Chicago, Illinois. I am a 51 year old male, XY chromosome carrier- and I would like to share my story.

I was born with very small male genitalia, but I was male and when karyotyping was performed on my cells I was in fact a XY carrier. However during gestation full development of reproductive anatomy was arrested resulting in the below average genitalia. Years would go by before we were to know that my body could not produce testosterone. My puberty as a boy was delayed due to the lack of testosterone.

There is an enzyme that the pituitary gland secretes that stimulates FSH and LH production which in turn results in the production of Testosterone and normal maturation of the male genitalia- because of the lack of this enzyme, I could not produce testosterone. Default hormone production was of estrogen and that was increased due to hormones in our food supply.

I did not go through normal puberty. I did grow hair on my body. My body fat production was similar to that in female and I also had some mild enlargement of my breasts.

I share this with you because I want you to stop and understand something- we didn't do Gender Care back then. No one tried to make me into a female. I was raised a male as I was assigned. I was effeminate and lacked male physique and typical male strength. I did not go through a voice change.

I was different. And because I was different I was bullied, I was beaten by class mates, and I had my property at school vandalized with slurs accusing me of being a homosexual, a queer, a "fag" and so much more.

But not once did I ever have an educator try to tell me I should be a girl. Not once did I have an educator or school district official try to mess with my gender. I fought this fight on my own.

Years of testosterone therapy left me infertile. On and off again hormone therapy stunted growth. I had to fight with insurance companies to get testosterone. Today we have clinics just handing this out. But I have had to fight for a hormone that my body cannot produce.

But with this therapy comes rage from the steroid. There is abnormal mood swings, there is bad acne, there is the sterility, and then there is the prostate issues and cardiac issues that started in my forties.

You want to give minors easy access to this with very little counseling. This is a dangerous hormone/steroid treatment program and you simply want minors to have access to it because they “believe” that they are the wrong gender. You have educators and social media influencers convincing minors that they are in the wrong gender. You have educators screwing with the minds of children and you do not understand the long term side effects of these therapies.

If I were a child born in the last 10 years, I would be afraid of what your educators would have done to me. This isn't a game. You need to “slow your roll” and think about the short and long term side effects to gender care and hormone therapy.

Please, for the love of God and humanity, allow people to get proper counseling and not fast track minors into gender hormone therapy. Do not fast track Puberty Blocking medications. And please, stop thinking that this is an easy fix and you that can stop and start puberty and easily switch genders. It is not that easy. This has been a rough process on my body for over 40 of my 51 years of life. Now I have to worry about increased chances of brittle bones because of the hormone therapy of the last 40 years. So I beg you to allow for proper counseling and waiting to start gender therapy until someone is of legal age.

Thank you for your time,

Rory Heath