

Submitter: Alison Jacob
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure: HB2458

My name is Alison Jacob, I am a Psychiatric Social Worker in private practice in Upstate New York. I have a trans identified daughter who is now 23 and has medicalized (ftm).

As a child our daughter was loving, gregarious and intelligent. She loved wearing 'girly-girl' dresses, doing her hair, playing with dolls, all things typically feminine. There was no evidence of gender confusion. Our daughter came out as a 15 year old in high school along with two of her friends. At first as bisexual, then lesbian and finally transgender. Upon entering high school she began to struggle with anxiety and depression. She received counseling and antidepressants. True to the research findings regarding medicalizing, her social transition (name change, new pronouns, clothing and hair cut short) was a precursor to the beginning of her medicalization at 19 when she went away to college.

With the assistance of Brandeis University's Counseling Center and Planned Parenthood in Waltham, MA she began testosterone treatments. When we resisted and suggested that she give her decision to medicalize more time and consideration considering the potential irreversible side effects, she became hostile and rejecting and stopped communicating with us. After three years of estrangement we wrote to her, simply stating that we loved her and missed her. She threatened us with a restraining order.

Our hearts are broken, our family decimated. We live in fear for her physical and mental health. It has been close to four years since we have seen or spoken to her.

I am progressive and socially conscious in my politics. As a social worker and the mother of a trans identifying child I am alarmed at the trans ideology that has captured our medical, educational and political institutions. Being a mental healthcare provider gives me a unique perspective. Psychotherapy by its very nature is exploratory, not affirmative.

Affirmative psychotherapy, medicalization and surgery without adequate mental health evaluation and thorough inquiry has the potential to do irreparable harm. It is imperative that healthcare providers (social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, MDs, surgeons) take our responsibility for the people we treat seriously, without political pressure from the left or the right.

I for one refuse to blindly accept trans ideology by burying my head and accepting treatment recommendations and options that desperately need further research, data and scientific inquiry.

Do no harm.

Alison Jacob, LCSW-R