

Florida House of Representatives

Representative Anna V. Eskamani

District 42

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November 28, 2022

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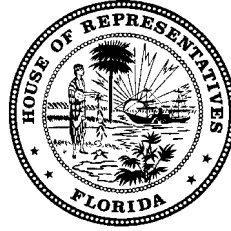
Dear Board of Medicine and Board of Osteopathic Medicine,

As a member of the Florida Legislature and a lifelong Floridian, I have always had a great deal of respect for medical professionals and the work of both the Board of Medicine (BOM) and Board of Osteopathy (BOO).

In the year 2000, my Mom was diagnosed with cancer, and, after a long fight, she tragically passed away in 2004. Medical professionals and providers showed her and our family support and compassion during that very difficult time. Since then, I have carried a sense of gratitude for the medical profession's mission of treating every person with care, no matter their background.

That is why I write to you with a heavy heart to express, with urgency, my deep opposition to the recent efforts by the BOM and BOO to restrict gender-affirming care for Floridians. This letter serves as my public comment submission for the following rule proposals: “Standards of Practice for the Treatment of Gender Dysphoria in Minors” ([64B15-14.014](#)) and “Standards of Practice for the Treatment of Gender Dysp” ([64B8-9.019](#)).

First, I want to address the alarming trend over the past decade of politicians increasingly politicizing the medical field. Medicine must of course be regulated to ensure safety of patients and providers, and we should also pursue policy solutions that provide greater access to care and eliminate health disparities. But regulations should be based on the best science and standards – not on campaign stump speeches.



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Unfortunately, this national trend of politicizing health care has found a dangerous home in Florida, and within your boards. Fueled by disinformation and a clearly transphobic agenda, you are about to ban access to care for a small but vulnerable population of people. I urge you to exercise your independent, professional judgment – and to put public health over politics by rejecting these rules.

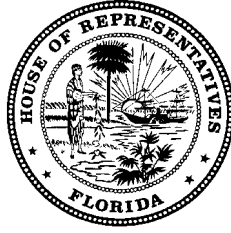
As we have stressed multiple times during your public meetings, gender-affirming care is essential, life-saving health care for transgender people to be able to live full and authentic lives. The state shouldn't stand in between medical providers who know what's best for their patients, transgender youth, and their parents or families.

Expert standards on gender-affirming care are already in place. Indeed, they have existed for decades. They require providers to carefully evaluate each patient and make decisions in the patient's best interest. **If the boards must adopt a new standard, adopt the most recent standards of care from the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH), which are based on the best available science and expert professional consensus.**

Rules and laws that deny life-saving health care to transgender people are rooted in misinformation and contrary to expert medical standards that guide gender affirmation. In fact, the nation's leading health organizations support gender-affirming care – including the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Medical Association, American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, Endocrine Society, and the Pediatric Endocrine Society.

Finally, according to data collected and analyzed by The Trevor Project, 45% of LGBTQ youth seriously considered suicide in the past year. But LGBTQ youth who felt high social support from their family reported attempting suicide at less than half the rate of those who felt low or moderate social support. And LGBTQ youth who live in a community that is accepting of LGBTQ people reported significantly lower rates of attempted suicide than those who do not.

LGBTQ youth are not inherently prone to suicide because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Rather, they are put at higher risk because of how they are mistreated and stigmatized in society. Your policies are making a hostile environment even worse.



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My district is home to Floridians of every background, including transgender youth and parents of transgender youth. It is my public duty, just like yours, to keep every person safe and secure.

Please consider the impact these rules will have on everyday Floridians, and the real life consequences imposed on those directly impacted. Also note that while the rules may not be retroactive, they will still absolutely impact the number of gender-affirming providers in Florida – which means even people who are “grandfathered” are at risk of losing access to care.

With all of this said, I humbly ask that you do no harm and oppose these politically motivated rules.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna". The letters are cursive and fluid.

Representative Anna V. Eskamani

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