

Dear Committee Members, thank you for your time,

I am a former “trans” kid.

As a child I was insistent, persistent, and consistent that I was a boy.

I have no doubt that if the option to take puberty-blockers and cross-sex hormones had been available, I would have done everything I could to obtain them, including threatening suicide especially if I had others encouraging me to threaten suicide as children are today.

In the short-term I likely would have felt better.

Testosterone is a controlled substance. Like other controlled substances, it has high risks to health and well-being and has the potential for both addiction and abuse. Testosterone makes almost anyone who takes it initially feel a sense of euphoria. If I had taken it as a child it would have allowed me to completely dissociate from myself as a girl and create a new persona, someone who could pretend that the horrible trauma that triggered my gender dysphoria didn't happen to me.

When I first started taking it, it would have boosted my confidence and increased my energy and most importantly, I would have felt safer.

If I took testosterone, it would have been so much easier to pretend that I was not the little girl who was brutally sexually assaulted. A little girl who became convinced at the moment of the assault that I was not safe being a girl. That the only way I could keep it from happening again was by becoming a boy.

Despite feeling better in the short term, in the long term taking testosterone would have been profoundly damaging, potentially even more damaging than the sexual assault. I can't imagine the impact of being told by teachers, doctors, and other adults that I was born in the wrong body. That I was inherently flawed.

It would have reinforced all the mistaken beliefs I had that caused me to develop gender dysphoria in the first place:

That being a girl was bad.

That it was my fault that those men hurt me.

That my body was a mistake.

That it was too dangerous be a girl.

If I had been medically transitioned, I wouldn't have gotten the help I needed to work through my self-hatred and shame.

I never would have realized that my transgender identity was a coping mechanism.

I am so thankful that my school psychologist put me on a healing path.

I am grateful to other therapists who helped me understand that my transgender identity was a result of the sexual assault not because I was born in the wrong body.

I shudder to think at what my life would be like if I'd been encouraged to believe that I was a boy.

I would have lived my life hating myself.

Puberty blockers would have retarded my growth and development.

Cross-sex hormones would have caused my otherwise healthy body to become dysfunctional.

The combination of both puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones would have left me sterile.

Children who says they feel better because of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones are likely telling the truth.

In the short term, these interventions allow children to avoid the difficulties they are facing, whether that be grappling with internalized homophobia, struggling with autism, or trying to recover from a significant trauma.

We should not be giving children controlled substances in order to make them feel better.

It is a horrible disservice to encouraging them to dissociate, to run away from their feelings, to run away from themselves and to take a drug that in the short term will help them to feel better by numbing their feelings but in the long term, permanently damage their bodies and in the long term, prevent them from getting

the help that they need to understand the difficult feelings that they're having in the first place.

It is natural for children to do what they can to shut down difficult feelings which is why we work hard to stop children from using drugs and alcohol.

We know that encouraging children to run away from their pain and struggles is not the solution even if it makes them feel better in the short term.

It is our job as adults to give children the message that no matter how intense and difficult their feelings are, they can work through them without dissociating from themselves to become a different person.

Because of loving, caring, and supportive therapists and teachers, I got the care I so desperately needed to process what happened to me.

Transgender activists often discount my story, saying I was never really transgender. They are right. I wasn't. And that is the point.

Even though I was insistent, consistent, and persistent about being a boy, I wasn't a boy. Yet gender doctors admit that the only diagnostic criteria used to determine if a child should get puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and surgeries is if the child is insistent, consistent, and persistent with gender confusion. It only takes one story like mine to show they are wrong. To show that children develop gender dysphoric feelings not because of being born in the wrong body, but as a coping mechanism.

The belief that a child can somehow be born in the wrong is a mystical view, not a medical view.

I have great respect for doctors. However, they have gotten it wrong in the past.

We are still suffering from the consequences of the opioid epidemic, where doctors were told by pharmaceutical companies that treating pain with dangerous and addictive opioids was safe and effective.

How many thousands of people died because doctors were following guidelines for pain management written by those who were profiting from the sale of opioids?

How many people have wrestled with serious addictions after well-meaning doctors prescribed medications that they had been told were safe and effective only to find out later that they were misled by pharmaceutical companies willing to put dollars ahead of human lives?

The so called “treatments” for gender dysphoria that are being championed by activists will go down in history as being far worse than the opioid crisis unless regulation are passed to protect children from these experimental and harmful interventions.

The only treatment proven to help manage and resolve gender dysphoria is therapy combined with allowing children to naturally progress through puberty naturally.

Children struggling with confusion about their identity need love and support.

I got the gift of time to heal and I am so incredibly grateful.

All children who are struggling with gender dysphoria deserve the same gift.
Please support BR 134.

Thank you,
Erin Brewer