

Members of the Colorado Title Board  
Wednesday, April 3rd, 2024  
Remarks in response to Initiative #175

To The Members of the Colorado Title Board:

I am Dr. Lora Melnicoe, a retired pediatrician representing the American Academy of Pediatrics, Colorado Chapter. Thank you for allowing me to comment on this Initiative, and the matter of single subject.

As a pediatrician, I am committed to all youth achieving optimal outcomes in their physical, mental and social well being. The first transgender patient I encountered was a foster child who had been physically abused. Violence, depression, anxiety, eating disorders and suicide attempts are all negative health outcomes more common in transgender youth. Providing gender affirming care has been shown to reduce these harmful conditions.

There are rampant misconceptions regarding the gender affirming care model. Listening, supporting, exploring, and other non-medical treatments are a cornerstone of care. Transgender is by definition a condition that is persistent, consistent and insistent over time. Ideally children and families receive care in a multidisciplinary setting with a physician, psychologist, and social worker all experienced in this field. Parental consent is required for medical and surgical treatment.

I bring that up because it is important regarding the single subject issue of this Initiative. It is too broad and covers a number of subjects. If a child or parent raises questions regarding gender concerns, the physician as well as their support staff, medical assistants, nurses, and any clinic social workers or psychologists who merely interview and listen could be liable.

If a patient requires treatment for anxiety, depression, or sleep disturbances as a result of gender concerns, the prescribing physician as well as the pharmacists preparing and dispensing the medications could be liable.

If a patient requires treatment for a suicide attempt, or violence inflicted due to their gender expression, it is possible that emergency room and hospital staff could be liable for providing necessary treatment.

This overly broad and ill conceived initiative could cause great harm and confusion for patients and the medical community. The American Academy of Pediatrics does not support legislation that blocks gender affirming care or interferes in the patient-physician relationship.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lora Melnicoe, MD, MPH  
Denver County Registered Elector