

From: Walt Heyer

Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2021 9:51 AM

Subject: HB113 -- Why it should be enacted, from my experience as a transgender female

Dear Montana State Representatives,

No child should be locked into a “trans” life. I support the Montana HB 113. Children in Montana should be protected.

Montana is considering measure HB113 to appropriately outlaw life-altering, irreversible, chemical or surgical interventions on children.

I have been all the way down that path. And I’ve come back to warn others.

My grandmother dressed me as a girl when I was 4, 5, and 6 years old. I was far too young to comprehend the long-term consequences of being encouraged to cross-dress at such a young age, much less fight back. In my child’s mind, it felt good to be the center of her attention. Now I call what grandma did to me “child abuse” because her grooming of me as a female negatively affected my entire life.

In adulthood, I was diagnosed with gender dysphoria and underwent unnecessary cross-gender hormone therapy and surgical gender change. I lived eight years as a woman and tried my best to make it work, but after surgery I still had gender dysphoria. Even worse, I was suicidal. Before giving me hormones and surgery, my medical providers should have helped me explore the possible psychological roots of my desire to escape into a female persona, but none did. I finally received proper psychotherapy years after surgery which resolved my gender dysphoria, but I am left with a body permanently mutilated.

I’m not the only one whose life was hurt by the rush to change gender. I have heard from so many trans adults who ask me for advice in going back to their birth sex that I compiled emails from 30 of them, along with the latest research, into a book, “Trans Life Survivors.” Several people in the book transitioned in their teens, but when they hit their twenties, their feelings of gender dysphoria changed. They grew out of it, but only after having made irreversible changes to their bodies, which destroyed their ability to have children, and losing years of their life to an alternate identity.

Should the medical field be free to push kids down a path that leads to physical destruction and emotional agony? Of course not. **Children do not have the capacity or mental maturity to consent to decisions with life-**

long consequences. And yet they are so easy to manipulate that they have become soft targets in today's raging political and cultural fight over what it means to be human.

HB113 protects vulnerable children from treatments that cause life-long harm by prohibiting medical or surgical treatments to affirm gender identity in transgender youth under age 18, thereby.

Access to quality, scientifically proven care is critical. Unfortunately, delaying puberty for healthy adolescents, giving cross-sex hormones or surgically removing healthy body parts is not scientifically proven care and the harms are well-documented. Puberty is not a disease—it is the answer.

People peddling life-altering, irreversible interventions—for profit—should, at least, wait until a person has the capacity to understand the risks and consequences and to give informed consent. This is particularly important, given what we know about the changing nature of gender dysphoria in children. When children experience sex confusion, it usually does not last.

Studies show most children who identify as other than their biological sex naturally grow out of it as they go through puberty, unless they are socially locked into an opposite-sex identity and puberty is blocked. A striking 60 to 90 percent of kids who are not reinforced in this desire or put on puberty blockers abandon a trans identity by adulthood.

No child should be locked into a trans life. That is not medical care. It's child abuse.

Walt Heyer, Durham, North Carolina, is an accomplished author and public speaker. Through his website, SexChangeRegret.com, and his blog, WaltHeyer.com, Heyer raises public awareness about the incidence of regret and the tragic consequences suffered as a result of unnecessary sex change surgery.