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TESTIFY REMOTELY

DEFENDERS IN ACTION

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ACTION DEFENDER SERIES

BRAD PAYNE
P. BRIAN NOBLE

TESTIFY REMOTELY

Do you want to let your voice be heard in the Legislative Branch? Emailing your elected official is **good**, but registering your position is **better**. It allows your legislator to hear your voice **officially**.

Learn how to:

TESTIFY REMOTELY

EASY STEPS TO TESTIFY REMOTELY 3-8

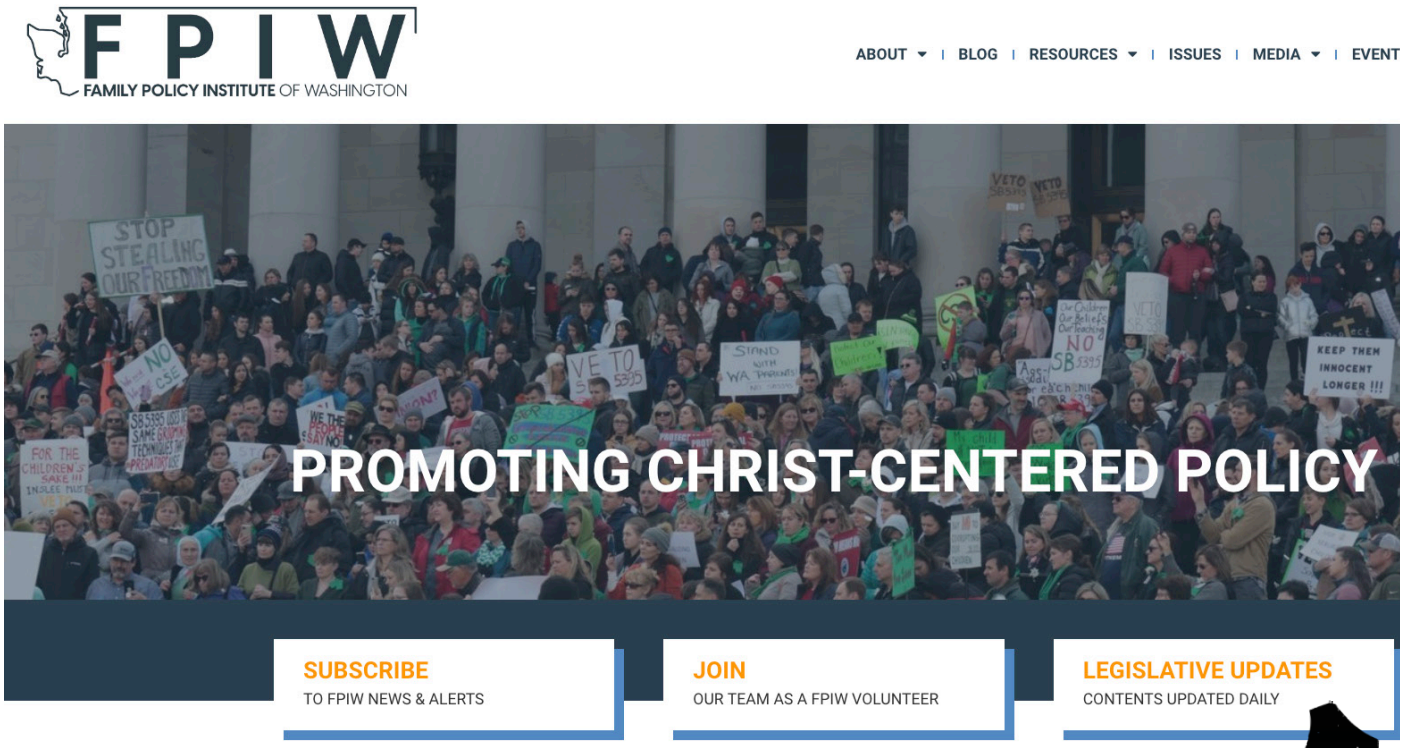
SAMPLE SENATE REPORT 9-11
On page 11 Public Testimony Example

SAMPLE HOUSE REPORT 12-20
On page 14 Public Testimony Example

DETAILED PROCESS FROM WA GOV WEBSITE 21-23

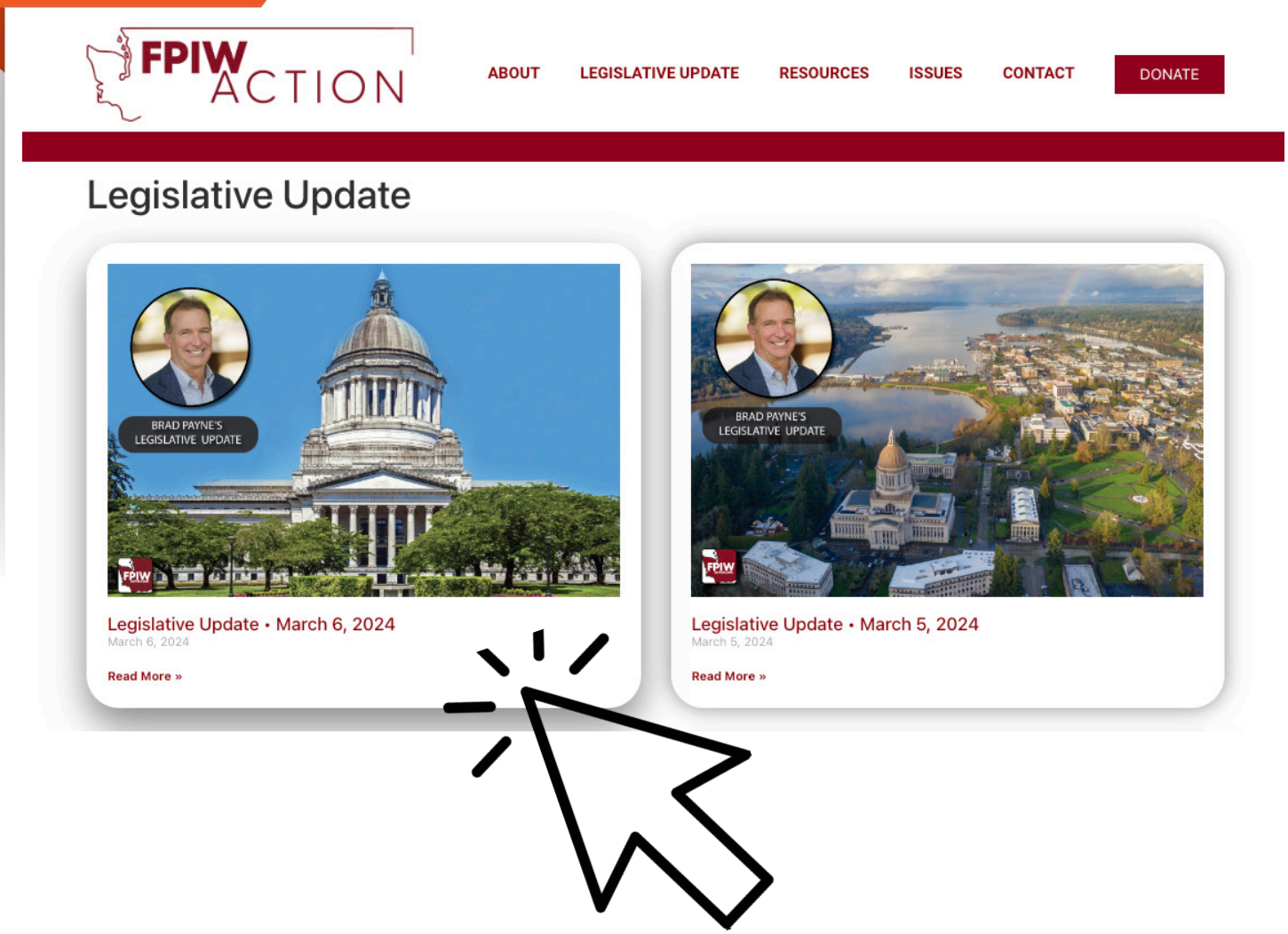
STEP 01

GO TO THE WEBSITE AT: FPIW.ORG



STEP 02

CLICK THE MOST RECENT LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



STEP 03

(A): CLICK DETAILED BILL INFO
(B): SCROLL DOWN UNTIL YOU FIND THE BILL YOU WANT TO TESTIFY ON.
(C): TO TESTIFY REMOTELY "CLICK HERE"

FPIW DEFENDERS TAKE ACTION

HB 1889 *RESPONSE NEEDED BY: February 19th at 9:30 a.m.*

HB 1889 — This bill would strike the requirement that applicants for professional licenses be U.S. citizens, allowing for the use of an individual tax identification number instead of a Social Security number. The bill also would allow undocumented students to pursue desired jobs by addressing the lack of clarity surrounding which licenses require an SSN.

REGISTER YOUR CON POSITION

DETAILED BILL INFO
CLICK HERE

DETAILED BILL INFO

SCROLL DOWN

ACTION ALERTS

We are attempting to gather statistics on the number of people registering for bills through our weekly FPIW Legislative Updates. To help us, please insert "FPIW Defender" in the organizational box when registering on the leg.wa.gov website: FPIW Defender, P.O. Box 975, Lynnwood, WA, 98046. (Or, if you wish to use your own address, that is your choice.)

If you have not previously registered your position on a bill or provided written, in-person or remote testimony, please go to our web page at fpiw.org and review the quick, simple steps provided in one of our four "how to" training manuals. There is also a training manual "How to look up a bill".

*****

HB 1889 would strike the requirement that applicants for professional licenses be U.S. citizens, allowing for the use of an individual tax identification number instead of a Social Security number. The bill also would allow undocumented students to pursue desired jobs by addressing the lack of clarity surrounding which licenses require an SSN. As of 2021, only around 22% of U.S. jobs require a professional license or certificate. Credentials are granted after an applicant has completed testing, training and educational requirements, and are intended to protect U.S. consumers by limiting licensure to qualified individuals. The bill lists optometrists, private investigators, private security guards, bail bond agents, money transmitters, and currency exchangers as professions that currently require licensees to be U.S. citizens.

If passed into law, the bill would eliminate the requirement for these professions. Democrats complain that licensing requirements create barriers to work for undocumented people due to U.S. citizenship requirements. Bill sponsor, Amy Walen, D-Kirkland, asks: "If someone can pass the very rigorous standards that we have in the state of Washington . . . why do we need to know about their federal documentation status?" That is the primary problem with this bill. The fix is easy. Prevent illegal immigrants from entering the U.S. and then migrating to Washington. We are not opposed to addressing licensing concerns for legal immigrants working towards U.S. citizenship.

This bill will undergo a public hearing in the Senate Committee on Labor & Commerce on February 19 at 10:30 a.m. To register your CON position, please click here. To provide written testimony, click here. To testify remotely, click here. To testify in person, click here.

*****

TO TESTIFY REMOTELY CLICK HERE

STEP 04

CONFIRM THE COMMITTEE, DATE/TIME, AND BILL/ISSUE

Committee Sign In - On Site Testimony Registration

Complete the fields below and press submit to sign up for remote testimony on the following bill/issue:

Committee: Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning
Date/Time: 3/22/2023 1:30:00 PM
Bill/Issue: ESSB 5599 Protected health care/youth
Location: House Hearing Rm D and Virtual

There is no guarantee that those who register to testify will be allowed to speak or be able to speak at specific times. Please check Committee Schedules and Documents https://app.leg.wa.gov/committeeschedules for updates or changes to committee schedules.

STEP 05

(A): REGISTER YOUR POSITION
(B): CLICK "NO" IN "TESTIFY AS A PANEL"

***Position:**

- ✓ Please Select
- Pro
- Con
- Other

Testify as a Panel?

○ Yes ◉ No

STEP 06

(A): COMPLETE ALL FIELDS IN THE FORM
(B): ORGANIZATION: FPIW DEFENDER

***First Name:**

***Last Name:**

***Email:**

Use only your own email address

Organization:

If you are testifying as an official representative on behalf of a particular organization, please specify:

FPIW DEFENDER

Address:

***City:**

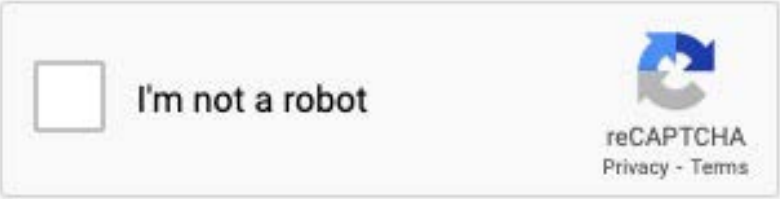
***State:**

***Zip:**

***Phone (e.g. 360-555-0123):**

STEP 07

CHECK "I'M NOT A ROBOT"



STEP 08

CLICK "SUBMIT REGISTRATION"

By clicking 'Submit Registration', you acknowledge you have read
of your information is accurate. After submitting, it may not be pos

Submit Registration | Cancel

SENATE BILL REPORT
ESSB 5599

As Amended by House, April 12, 2023

Title: An act relating to supporting youth and young adults seeking protected health care services.

Brief Description: Supporting youth and young adults seeking protected health care services.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services (originally sponsored by Senators Liias, Wilson, C., Dhingra, Lovelett, Nguyen and Randall).

Brief History:
Committee Activity: Human Services: 2/06/23, 2/14/23 [DPS, DNP].
Floor Activity: Passed Senate: 3/1/23, 27-19.
Passed House: 4/12/23, 57-39.

Brief Summary of Engrossed First Substitute Bill

- Provides that a licensed shelter for runaway or homeless youth does not need to contact the youth's parents if there is a compelling reason not to, which includes a youth seeking protected health services.
- Allows host homes to house youth without parental permission if a youth is seeking or receiving protected health care services.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5599 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.
Signed by Senators Wilson, C., Chair; Kauffman, Vice Chair; Frame and Nguyen.

Minority Report: Do not pass.
Signed by Senators Boehnke, Ranking Member; Warnick and Wilson, J..

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff: Alison Mendiola (786-7488)

Background: Youth Shelters. If a licensed overnight shelter or licensed organization provides services to homeless or runaway youth and their families, shelters a youth and knows that the child is away from home without parental permission, it must contact the youth's parents within 72 hours, but preferably in 24 hours. If there are compelling reasons to not notify the parents, the shelter or organization is to contact the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) instead. Compelling reasons include, but are not limited to circumstances that indicate notifying the parent or legal guardian will subject the minor to abuse or neglect.

Host Homes. A host home program operated by a tax exempt organization for youth not in the care of or receiving services from DCYF does the following:

- recruits and screens potential homes in the program, including performing background checks on individuals over the age of 18 residing in the home, through the Washington State Patrol or equivalent law enforcement agency, and performs physical inspections of the home;
- obtains a notarized permission slip or limited power of attorney from the parent or legal guardian of the youth, authorizing the youth to participate in the program, and the authorization is updated every six months;
- obtains insurance for the program through an authorized insurance provider;
- provides mandatory reporter and confidentiality training; and
- registers with the Secretary of State.

Host home means a private home that volunteers to host youth in need of temporary placement that is associated with a host home program.

Summary of Engrossed First Substitute Bill: If a licensed youth shelter or homeless youth program knows a youth is a away from home with permission, that shelter or program has a duty to contact the parents or guardians unless a compelling reason exists. Compelling reasons include when a minor is seeking or receiving protected health care services. Mandated reports have a duty to report child abuse and neglect.

Host homes do not need parent or legal guardian authorization if there is a compelling reason not to contact the parent or guardian. Compelling reason means that youth is in the host home or seeking placement in a host home while seeking or receiving protected health care services.

Protected health care services means gender affirming treatment and reproductive health care services as defined in statute. Gendering affirming treatment means a service or product that a health care provider, prescribes to an individual to support and affirm the individual's gender identity. Gender affirming treatment includes, but is not limited to, treatment for gender dysphoria. Gender affirming treatment can be prescribed to two-spirit, transgender, nonbinary, and other gender diverse individuals. "Reproductive health care

services" means any medical services or treatments, including pharmaceutical and preventive care service or treatments, directly involved in the reproductive system and its processes, functions, and organs involved in reproduction, in all stages of life. Reproductive health care services does not include infertility treatment.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard*. PRO: Access to health care is important to everyone, but especially trans youth. When you don't have access it leads to life long challenges, including mental health. One in three trans youth report attempting suicide, this rate is much higher than for cis gendered peers. Not every family is ready to provide support to trans youth so if that youth is seeking protected health services, they should be able to safely access that care in supportive environments like shelters and host homes. If shelters are not able to get in touch with the parents, they contact DCYF so there is someone protecting the best interests of the youth. Until the day all kids are accepted, we need to provide loving and supporting places so we can all reach our potential we were given at birth. LGBTQIA+ youth are overrepresented among the homeless, due to families kicking them out or a person seeking services from another state. Our state has a long history of advocating for the rights of LGBTQ community and this bill continues that tradition. We know people are moving to Washington, this will help support families seeking access to services. All youth deserve a stable home. This bill doesn't change medical laws or consent required, but provides support for trans youth.

CON: There is no mention about parents or parental involvement but rather an emotional response to helping children. Minors cannot consent to these kinds of medical procedures. The bill doesn't say how long youth can be away from home, this should be considered child abuse. A parents job is to protect their child, this bill strips parents of that ability. Gender is in your imagination. This bill legalizes the kidnapping of children, allows for the harboring of minors, and segregates us from the union. Children should not be housed in mixed sex situations.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Marko Liias, Prime Sponsor; J. Denise Diskin, QLaw Foundation of Washington; Megan Veith, Building Changes; Jarel Sanders, Equal rights Washington; Matthew Wilson, Oasis Youth Center; Heather Maisen, Public Health -- Seattle and King County.

CON: Eric Pratt, America; Julie Barrett, Conservative Ladies of Washington; Oli London ;

HOUSE BILL REPORT
ESSB 5599

As Passed House - Amended:
April 12, 2023

Title: An act relating to supporting youth and young adults seeking protected health care services.

Brief Description: Supporting youth and young adults seeking protected health care services.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services (originally sponsored by Senators Liias, Wilson, C., Dhingra, Lovelett, Nguyen and Randall).

Brief History:
Committee Activity:
Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning: 3/22/23, 3/24/23 [DPA].
Floor Activity:
Passed House: 4/12/23, 57-39.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill
(As Amended by House)

- Expands the compelling reasons for a youth shelter or other similar organization not to notify a parent following the child's entry to the shelter or organization when a minor child is seeking or receiving gender affirming treatment and reproductive health care services.
- Allows host homes to host a youth seeking or receiving gender affirming treatment or reproductive health care services without receiving parental permission.
- Establishes requirements for host home programs that serve youth without parental authorization seeking or receiving "protected health care services" to notify the Department of Children, Youth, and Families and provide certain case management.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, YOUTH, & EARLY LEARNING

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Senn, Chair; Cortes, Vice Chair; Taylor, Vice Chair; Callan, Goodman, Ortiz-Self and Rule.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Eslick, Ranking Minority Member; Couture, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dent and Walsh.

Staff: Luke Wickham (786-7146).

Background:

Licensed Overnight Youth Shelters.
When a youth first enters an overnight shelter, the facility must:

- determine whether the youth's parents are aware of the whereabouts of the youth;
- follow parental notification procedures (provided below); and
- notify law enforcement or the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) of any youth age 12 or younger who is unaccompanied by an adult and requesting services.

If an overnight youth shelter or licensed organization providing services for runaway or homeless youth learns that a youth staying in its facility does not have parental permission, the facility must:

- notify the parent by telephone or other reasonable means unless compelling reasons exist within 72 hours, preferably within 24 hours;
- notify the DCYF if compelling reasons exist not to notify a parent including concerns of abuse or neglect; and
- review the publicly available information on missing youth made available by the Washington State Patrol at least every eight hours while the youth is present.

Compelling reasons not to notify a parent include, but are not limited to, circumstances that indicate that notifying the parent or legal guardian will subject the minor to abuse or neglect.

Host Home.
A host home is defined as a private home that volunteers to host youth in need of temporary placement that is associated with a host home program.

To qualify for exemption from licensure, host home programs must:

- recruit and screen potential homes in the program, including performing background checks on the individuals living in the home who are over age 18;
- screen and provide case management to youth in the program;
- obtain a notarized permission slip or limited power of attorney from the parent or legal guardian of the youth authorizing the youth to participate in the program;

- obtain insurance;
- provide mandatory reporter and confidentiality training; and
- register as a nonprofit organization with the Office of the Secretary of State.

Any host home program that receives government funding must report certain information to the Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs.

Gender Affirming Treatment.
Gender affirming treatment is defined in law to mean a service or product that a health care provider prescribes to an individual to support and affirm the individual's gender identity that includes, but is not limited to, treatment for gender dysphoria.

Reproductive Health Care Services.
Reproductive health care services are defined in state law to mean any medical services or treatments, including pharmaceutical and preventative care service or treatments, directly involved in the reproductive system and its processes, functions, and organs involved in reproduction, in all stages of life. Reproductive health care services do not include infertility treatment.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The compelling reasons for a youth shelter or other similar organization not to notify a parent when the shelter or organization knows the child is away from a lawfully prescribed home without parental permission are expanded to include when a minor child is seeking or receiving gender affirming treatment and reproductive health care services.

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) must do the following after receiving a report from an overnight youth shelter or other licensed organization that provides services to homeless youth that a minor child who is seeking or receiving gender-affirming treatment or reproductive health care services is being served by the shelter or organization without parental permission:
- offer to make referrals on behalf of the minor for appropriate behavioral health services; and
- offer services designed to resolve the conflict and accomplish a reunification of the family.

An exception is created to the requirement that a host home program obtain a notarized permission slip or limited power of attorney from a parent or legal guardian of the youth authorizing the youth to participate in the program with authorization updated every six months when the youth is seeking or receiving gender affirming treatment or reproductive health care services.

A host home program that serves a youth without parental authorization seeking or receiving "protected health care services" must do the following:

- report to the DCYF within 72 hours of the youth's participation in the program and following this report the DCYF must make a good faith attempt to notify the parent of this report and offer services designed to resolve the conflict and accomplish a reunification of the family;
- report to the DCYF of the youth's participation in the host home program at least once every month when the youth remains in the host home longer than one month; and
- provide case management outside of the host home and away from any individuals residing in the home at least once per month.

Host homes may provide care for a youth who is receiving services from the department if the youth is:
- not subject to a dependency proceeding; and
- seeking or receiving protected health care services.

The Office of Homeless Youth (OHY) must contract with an outside entity to gather data regarding the number of unsheltered homeless youth under age 18 in the state and develop recommendations for supporting these youth. The OHY is required to submit the information and recommendations to the Legislature by July 1, 2024.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on April 17, 2023.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Children need the support of their family and community. For too many children, their family and community are not supportive environments. Young people who aren't able to access gender-affirming care are subject to many risks. This bill allows a shelter. This will begin a journey that will allow the child to return to their family of origin.

The best environment for children is to be supported by their parents and their loving community. Unfortunately, for too many youth in our state, that family environment is not a safe place for them.

There are unfortunately significant numbers of transgender (trans) youth who are unsheltered and in some cases, living in unsheltered homelessness across Washington. These conditions are incredibly dangerous for young people. Young people who are not able to access gender-affirming care are at significant risk of a whole host of health care challenges, including but not limited to, self harm and suicide. When family is not a safe place for young people, there should be a safe place for them to access the care that they

need.

The purpose of this bill is to allow our licensed shelters to connect young people to the services that are essential to their well-being when they encounter a young person who can't be at home and is in unsafe conditions and to hopefully begin that journey of reconciliation back to their care network so that they can achieve success.

There are estimates that as many as 40 percent of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ+ and that as many as 30,000 trans youth live in Washington.

Youth in this circumstance may be seeking all kinds of housing arrangements. Puberty blockers save the lives of some young people.

This bill does nothing to change the laws related to medical consent.
This bill is about creating a safe opportunity and possibility for young people to connect with medical and mental health care providers who provide a standard of care and treatment that has been found safe and effective by every major medical body, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Medical Association.

Far too many young trans people in this state have been bullied, discriminated against in schools, and pushed to the margins of society. This bill won't solve all of those issues, but will give those people a fighting chance.

Not every child has a supportive family that gives them the care they need. When queer and trans youth are in shelters it is not because they come from a supportive family, it is because their parents issue an ultimatum to be the gender their parents want them to be.

About 10 percent of trans people report being physically assaulted by a family member after coming out.

Sixteen percent of LGBTQ+ youth report living in unsheltered environments; many said they were kicked out or abandoned due to their LGBTQ+ identity.

This bill provides a safe place so that these youth are not returned to violence or forced onto the streets as a long-term living arrangement is identified, such as host homes.

Kids are already showing up in youth homeless shelters now because of discriminatory bans on gender-affirming care and reproductive health care in other states. Some of these youth have supportive families, but these families worry they may be persecuted in their home state if they support their child's gender-affirming or reproductive health care.

The reality is that not every house environment is a safe space.

LGBTQ+ people are overrepresented in the homeless community.

This bill actively prevents trans suicide. If even one family member uses a person's chosen pronoun, their chance of suicide drastically decreases.

Accessing protected health care services can be challenging for any young person, but can be particularly difficult for homeless children and children in unsupportive households.

Host homes originated as a response to supporting the needs of LGBTQ+ youth.

Families and young people are moving to Washington based on persecution in their home states for doing nothing more than supporting their children. We should help these families whether they need help relocating or if they do not have housing. This bill is about providing long-term supportive housing through a host home model. This bill is about helping children access LGBTQ+ services.

Many trans youth do not have affirming, loving homes.

What we are witnessing from other states and in Congress is an extreme agenda legislating surveillance, censorship, and an invasion of privacy. There is a politicized ideology targeting trans children and families, and trans youth and their families are being forced to become political refugees by their own state governments.

Trans people are a protected class in Washington and this bill advances that protection.

Accessing gender-affirming care has been proven to lower rates of adverse mental health outcomes, build self-esteem, and improve overall quality of life for trans and gender-diverse youth.

Transgender young people will benefit from this bill based on their access to gender-affirming care. This bill has nothing to do with surgery or private parts. Gender-affirming care can be allowing a young person to use a different name, determine the length of their hair, or choose their clothes. This treatment is completely reversible.

Every medical association has endorsed gender-affirming treatment. Trans kids should get to grow up and be exactly who they want to be.

(Opposed) This bill is a disturbing government overreach and abuse of power. This bill attempts to usurp parental rights and that is not okay.

A parent's job is to protect their children from the outside world. This bill seeks to strip children from that protection.

Taking puberty blockers and sex hormones has dangerous and lasting effects on our bodies. One of the lasting effects of the use of testosterone on a young female body is to weaken the

vaginal walls.

This bill keeps minors away from the people who care about their well-being more than anyone else, their parents.

Medical transition does not prevent suicide. Many people who transition report that the initial euphoria caused by transitional medical treatment is short-lived and a recent study found that those who have genital surgery are 19 times more likely to commit suicide.

This bill would divide families by giving troubled teens an easy out to have the state shelter them without parental consent just by uttering a few words.

A recent law allows children 13 and older to receive gender-affirming treatments in Washington. These treatments are being significantly restricted by European countries such as the United Kingdom, Finland, Sweden, and Norway. American medical associations still support these treatments because they are very profitable.

Under this bill, parents could lose custody of their children immediately without due process or legal recourse if a child of any age claims a trans identity and their parent will not approve of hormones or surgeries for the child. Parents may be desperately searching for these children.

It is unclear what would happen with this bill if one parent wants to consent to their 13-year-old's double mastectomy and the other parent is against it.

There shouldn't be a situation where a parent is not notified about the location of a child when the parent has not harmed them. A parent should never be told that they don't have a right to know where their child is.

There is already a foster care system in place for children who have experienced abuse or neglect.

The state should not drive a wedge between children and their parents.

The claim that children know their gender identity or require medical treatment goes against medical evidence.

Minors need to have parents as a guardrail to ensure that their children don't go into a ditch or go careening off the road.

If there are compelling reasons not to call a parent, law enforcement should be notified. The state has proven itself to be a bad parent.

It is shocking that 13 is the age of consent for transgender treatment. There is a chicken and

egg problem here where kids see others who are transgender and then profess to be transgender. Children can't get facial tattoos or smoke, but can get all kinds of surgery and everything else. Many children grow out of claiming they are transgender before they turn 18. This feels like an Orwellian dystopia where the state is going to take your kids.

Many children want to be professional athletes as a kid and parents don't affirm those goals.
Minor children cannot consent to these treatments.

Under this bill a minor is able to disappear from their guardian if they are receiving protected health care services. This bill legalizes the kidnapping of minors. This segregates us from the union and destroys our future.

Every claim supporting this bill is based on academic papers that have been extensively and thoroughly refuted.

European entities have questioned the use of medical interventions to treat gender dysphoria and have recommended psycho-social interventions. Before rushing in to allow children medical interventions without parental notification, we should wait for the evidence on these interventions.

Cutting parents out of the equation doesn't make any sense.

Gender treatments and surgeries amount to big business.

This bill removes the constitutional requirement of due process and replaces it with the term "compelling reason." If abuse is occurring, the existing emancipation process may be used.

Gender-affirming care includes genital mutilation and castration. The United Kingdom, Norway, and Sweden have stopped all gender-affirming surgeries. This will open up the taxpayers to lawsuits when children change their mind about a body-altering surgery.

Children's brains are still developing until age 24 or 25.

Minors are not mature enough to make decisions about gender-affirming care. This bill would turn children over to families that would support the gender-supporting treatment industry. If a child believes they are a mermaid, we don't sew their legs together. These treatments create irreversible effects on people. This bill invites runaway kids to come to Washington where they will be vulnerable to trafficking.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Senator Marko Liias, prime sponsor; Danni Askini and Jessica McHegg, Gender Justice League; Melissa Auclaire; Sara Kukonnen, Planned Parenthood Greater Northwest; Rebekah Gardea, QLaw Foundation of Washington ; Jonathan Frochtwajg, Cascade AIDS Project; Megan Veith, Building Changes; Jarel

Sanders, Equal Rights Washington; Lisa Keating, My Purple Umbrella; Ray Dechant; and Jaxtyn Osborn.

(Opposed) Julie Barrett, Conservative Ladies of Washington; Gabriel Jacobs; Linnea Comstock; Joshua Hardwick; Christian Nelson; Eric Pratt, I, America; Margaret Lee; Dawn Land; Team (Theresa) Freedom (Scherling); Sharon Damoff; Angela Dabb; Beth Daranciang; Sean Swope; Sarah Garriott; Gabriel Jacobs; Jason Setzer; Jeffrey Denison; and Elizabeth VanSteertegem.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: Bruce Monell; Bill Eldridge; Amanda McKinney, Yakima County; Lauren Armstrong; Alex Chrostowski, Gays Against Groomers; Lorilee Gates; Jessica Rice; Theresa Schrempp; Dave White, Climate Change Truth Inc.; Christy Frazier; Dawn Seaver; Suzanne Rohne; Leah Anaya, Washington Moms For America; and Lucky Nicacio.

DETAILED PROCESS FROM WA WEBSITE

https://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/Testify.aspx

How to Testify in Committee
Click Committee Schedules, Agendas, and Documents for individual committee agendas and daily and weekly meeting schedules.

"Open" Legislature
Washington State has one of the most open legislatures in the country. A bill has a public hearing before Senate and House committees before being considered on the floor of the House and Senate. For the 2023 session, House and Senate committees will meet using a format which allows for both in-person and remote participation. You have the opportunity to provide written testimony, state your position on a bill, or register to testify either in person or remotely by registering at Committee Sign In. You may also contact your legislator making your position on a bill known. You can do so by writing a letter, sending an e-mail, calling the legislator's Olympia office, or by calling the Legislative Hotline at 800.562.6000.

Committee Hearings
Legislative hearings are conducted informally. The rules are somewhat relaxed but are intended to help preserve decorum and allow respectful, courteous debate. Anyone can testify; you do not need formal training.

To find out when a hearing is scheduled:

- Click Committee Schedules, Agendas, and Documents to view committee meeting schedules.
- Call or email the Legislative Information Center at 1.800.562.6000 or support@leg.wa.gov.
- Subscribe to the Legislature's Committee E-mail Notification Service.

Before the Hearing
Are You a Lobbyist? Generally, if you are testifying on a bill or issues and represent only yourself, you will not be required to register as a lobbyist. A Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) brochure outlines guidelines on this subject.

You do not have to register and report if you:

1. appear only before public meetings of legislative committees or state agencies,
2. or do not receive pay, expenses or other consideration for lobbying and make no expenditure for on behalf of a legislator, elected official or state employee in connection with lobbying, or
3. restrict your lobbying to four days during any three-month period and spend no more than $35 for or on behalf of a legislator, elected official or state employee.

You can check with the PDC if you're uncertain. The PDC provides online information for lobbyists as well.

Prepare Your Remarks. Time is usually limited, so be brief and direct. Written testimony should not be read at committee hearings. Writing your comments in outline form will be helpful when you speak, and you should summarize your written testimony.

Avoid Duplication. If other persons will be offering similar testimony at the hearing, try to coordinate your testimony and avoid duplication. Well organized testimony is the most effective.

At the Meeting
Testifiers can sign in electronically for all committees at Committee Sign In, or at the kiosks located around the legislative campus. The sign-in window closes one hour before the meeting is set to begin.

- Regardless of whether you sign in to testify remotely or in person, you will receive an individualized link to join the meeting remotely. Do not share your Zoom link for the meeting, and only use as a backup if your plans change. For more detailed instructions on testifying remotely or in person, please visit Committee Sign In.
- Be punctual; usually there is only one public hearing at which testimony is taken on a particular bill.
- Check to see if proposed amendments or substitute bills are available at the Committee Schedules page. Click view docs for the meeting you are interested in.
- Maintain proper committee protocol: wait to be acknowledged by the committee Chair before speaking; ensure testimony is respectful and professional; and follow rules for testimony established by the Chair.

Providing Testimony - In Person

- If you sign in to testify in person, only use your link to participate remotely as a backup if your circumstances change.
- Approach the testimony table when you are called on to testify. The microphones will already be turned on.

Providing Testimony - Remote

- Backgrounds that include a campaign sign, a slogan, or any other material that is campaign-related, offensive, or otherwise defamatory will not be permitted. Be aware that failure to follow the rules for testimony established by the Chair may result in forfeiting the opportunity to testify.
- See detailed instructions on how to join a House or Senate meeting once signed in.

How the Meeting Is Conducted
Be present at the beginning of the hearing. The committee chair will open the hearing on a particular bill. Frequently, opening comments will be made by the bill's sponsor and/or by committee staff. Sometimes, however, the Chair will ask for testimony from proponents and opponents immediately.

The Chair will organize the hearing to ensure

1. committee members hear relevant information,
2. interested persons are given the opportunity to express their positions, and
3. the hearing does not exceed the time available.

Most committee hearings are limited to two hours and may have several matters pending. The Chair will attempt to be fair and provide each person an opportunity to testify. It may be necessary, however, to restrict testimony so that everyone is given an opportunity to express their opinions. You may not be called on to testify, however, you may still provide written testimony up to 24 hours after the start of the hearing.

Making Your Remarks

1. Begin by introducing yourself to the Chair and committee members and stating your purpose. For example, "Mr. or Madam Chair and members of the committee, I am John Doe from Spokane. I am here representing myself. I support this bill because . . ."
2. In your opening remarks, make it clear whether you are representing other citizens or a separate group.
3. Be brief and be sure your remarks are clear. Avoid being too technical and do not repeat previously made remarks. You do not need to be nervous or worried about how you present your testimony.
4. Be prepared for questions and comments from committee members. These are designed to gain additional information, but don't answer if you are not sure of the answer. Tell the members you will send a written answer to the committee, and then follow through.
5.Restrict yourself to your testimony. Abstain from other overt demonstrations such as clapping, cheering, booing, etc.

How to Submit Written Testimony

If you are unable to attend a committee meeting or if you would like to supply additional information, you may use the following method for submitting written testimony:

In the House. You may submit written testimony up to 24 hours after the start of the hearing, or you may email your written testimony directly to all committee members. Be sure to include the bill number and your position on the bill. A list of Committee Chairs can be found at this website: http://app.leg.wa.gov/Rosters/CommitteeMembersByCommittee/House.

In the Senate. You may submit written testimony up to 24 hours after the start of the hearing, or you may email your written testimony directly to committee members. Be sure to include the bill number and your position on the bill. Another option is to email your written testimony to committee staff, as an alternative or in addition to submitting testimony to committee members. A list of Senate committees and staff can be found at this website: http://leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/Pages/default.aspx.

Your District's Legislators. Please refer to How to comment on a bill for instructions on submitting bill comments directly to members in your district.

Family Policy Institute
OF WASHINGTON

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