



January 18, 2021

Representative Barry Usher
Chair Judiciary Committee

Re: Opposition to HB 113 Youth Health Protection

Representative Usher and committee members:

I am writing in opposition to HB113 which is supported by the Montana Nurses Association (MNA).

Having over 30 years in mental nursing practice here in Montana, I've had extensive experience in caring for gender non-conforming and transgender children, adolescents and their families. The *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* estimated that there are 1.7 million youth of high school age who identify as LGBTQ+.

The *American Nurses Association* states *Nurses must deliver culturally congruent, safe care and advocate for LGBTQ+ populations*. In addition to the *American Nurses Association*, guidelines for appropriate treatment of gender non-conforming and Transgender youth been developed by the *American Academy of Pediatrics* as well as other medical associations.

The *World Professional Association for Transgender Health* standards of care for Transgender

Youth compels those of us who provide mental health care to:

1. Directly assess gender dysphoria in children and adolescents.
2. Provide family counseling and supportive psychotherapy.
3. Assess and treat any co-existing mental health concerns as part of the overall plan of care.
4. Refer adolescents for additional interventions to alleviate gender dysphoria.
5. Educate and advocate on behalf of gender dysphoric children, adolescents and their families.
6. Provide children, youth, and their families with information and referral for peer support groups of gender nonconforming and transgender children.

The country is making progress in caring for our young people, I encourage Montana to begin to take the lead in care for our transgender youth.

Sincerely,

John Honsky, APRN

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MNA, Council on Advanced Practice

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