



Ohio Children's Hospital Association

Saving, protecting and enhancing children's lives

Media Statement

December 15, 2023

The following statement can be attributed to Nick Lashutka, President & CEO, Ohio Children's Hospital Association, in response to the Ohio General Assembly's passage of Sub. HB 68...

"We are incredibly disappointed in the Ohio General Assembly's passage of Substitute House Bill 68. Ohio's children's hospitals have been working tirelessly and in good faith with the Ohio General Assembly to amend this legislation to ensure there are not adverse impacts on our patients, families, and medical professionals in the pediatric health workforce.

We are appreciative of the Ohio Senate's efforts to improve the bill by adopting a grandfather clause for existing patients and clarifying that only one parent is required for consent to access mental health treatment. However, dangerous language remains in the bill restricting how medical professionals can talk to patients and their families, and the bill prohibits any medication therapy for new patients. Physicians are ethically and legally obligated to provide comprehensive care information to their patients and should not be banned from responding to families who are seeking help. For these reasons, we remain opposed to the bill.

We do not perform any surgeries on minors for the condition of gender dysphoria. Children's hospitals' gender clinics were established to respond to the needs of families and youth who need help. The foundation of our clinics is to support families and youth with their mental health needs, and each patient undergoes a rigorous mental health assessment to determine if this care is appropriate for them.

If this bill becomes law, it will be devastating to kids and their families who are already at their most vulnerable and will place an insurmountable barrier between patients and their medical professionals for often lifesaving care.

Sub. HB 68 would have a catastrophic impact on a small but high-risk population of children. We respectfully request Governor DeWine veto this legislation. Should he do so, Ohio's children's hospitals are committed to working with the Ohio General Assembly and Governor DeWine to develop legislation that addresses concerns raised during debate on HB 68, while preserving access to care for this population of children."

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