

October 7, 2022  
The Honorable Merrick Garland  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland,

We are writing as a group of individuals who formerly identified as transgender. Many of us were young teenagers when we decided, on the direction of medical “experts,” to pursue irreversible hormone treatments and surgeries to bring our bodies into closer alignment with what we thought was our true “gender identity.” Many of us had extensive histories of mental illness. Many of us had experienced significant childhood trauma. But all of this was ignored because we uttered the word “gender.” This utterance placed us on a narrow medical pathway that led us to sacrifice our healthy bodies and future fertility in obeisance to the claim that our suffering was a result of having a “gender identity” that did not “match” our biological sex. In other words, we were “born in the wrong body.”

We didn’t know better; we were young, and we trusted our doctors. Our parents were also misled. They were told the common myth that if they did not “affirm” our new identities, which entailed fully approving our medical transition, then we would likely commit suicide. Given these options, what loving parent wouldn’t choose to transition their child? This is not informed consent, but a decision forced under extreme duress.

Some of us have chosen to speak out publicly about the harm that “gender affirming care” has caused us. But most detransitioners choose to remain silent or anonymous, because unlike the joyful and supportive communities that welcome all who transition, no such loving community awaits us. Instead, we are routinely harassed and browbeaten into silence for being an inconvenience to popular narratives around “gender.” But our growing population is becoming impossible to ignore, and others have started amplifying our suppressed voices by denouncing the uncontrolled medical experiments being performed on children in hospitals in the name of “gender affirming care.”

The American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, and Children’s Hospital Association fully endorse the “gender affirmation” model of care, which prevents medical professionals from questioning a child’s self-reported transgender identity, and from exploring possible underlying factors causing their dysphoria. These endorsements, however, run counter to the recommendations of other countries, such as Sweden, Finland, and the U.K., who have conducted systematic reviews of evidence and concluded, unanimously, that the risks and uncertainties outweigh any known benefits. American medical organizations have not conducted a systematic review of the evidence; their recommendations are based on a small number of badly flawed studies and ignore contravening evidence from other studies (precisely what systematic reviews are meant to prevent).

The recent letter by these groups calling on the DOJ to put pressure on social media companies to censor who they portray as “high-profile users on social media” sharing “false and misleading information” is nothing more than an attempt to silence the reasonable voices of concerned critics calling for a more cautious approach to experimental medical practices impacting vulnerable children.

We condemn all violence, threats of violence, and intimidation directed at physicians and hospital staff without caveat, and anyone who engages in such behavior should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. But we also cannot ignore the harms being carried out against countless children in the name of “gender affirmation” that constitute much more than mere threats—we bear the literal scars of this medical violence.

We must not conflate passionate criticism with violence or incitement of violence.

The medical safeguarding of children should not be a political issue. Since truth is a prerequisite for justice, we must ensure that the already hot embers of political tribalism are not stoked. Children deserve the best evidence-based medical care available. Silencing the victims and critics of “gender affirming” practices is not a pathway to truth and justice, but to ignorance and further harm.

Please do the right thing.

Signed,

Chloe Cole  
Helena Kerschner  
Cat Cattison  
Sinéad Watson  
Grace Lidinsky-Smith  
Ritchie  
Prisha Mosley