

Judiciary Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-7135

AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF REPRODUCTIVE AND GENDER-

Title: AFFIRMING HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO PATIENTS.

Vote Date: 4/4/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/24/2025

File No.: 769

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Judiciary Committee

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REASONS FOR BILL:

In 2022, Connecticut became the first state to pass a “shield law” to protect individuals who come to the state for reproductive and/or gender-affirming health care services. In the wake of recent events across the nation, and in order to protect providers and patients from the possibility of other states throughout the country seeking to prosecute and/or intimidate them for obtaining health care that is legal in Connecticut, this bill makes necessary changes to Connecticut’s “shield law” to clarify and enhance the scope of its protections.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

At the request of the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), the substitute language makes wording changes to section 2 and makes conforming changes in sections 4 and 6 to add “gender-affirming care services” to these sections.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Sean Scanlon, CT Comptroller: Comptroller Scanlon supports this legislation because it would add gender-affirming care to the existing Reproductive Freedom Defense Act, which strengthens our existing anti-discrimination statute. He believes that the passing of this legislation will send a strong message that CT is committed to ensuring access to essential healthcare without fear of retaliation along with caring for our society's most vulnerable classes. Given the uncertain healthcare environment of this country, this is essential.

Alma Nunley, Office of the Attorney General: Alma Nunley and the office of the Attorney General support this legislation because it counters the attacks by the Trump administration on reproductive and gender-affirming care, which citizens have a right to. It draws on lessons learned from other state shield laws which helps craft more effective legislation. It also makes technical changes to consolidate and repeal unnecessary statutes related to gender-affirming and reproductive care. Finally, it gives protections of gender-affirming care to that of abortion.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Connecticut Hospital Association: The CT Hospital Association supports this legislation because they agree that there is a need to rewrite the current laws that protect providers, patients, and information for reproductive healthcare and gender-affirming care into one comprehensive statute and make corresponding changes to related laws.

Gretchen Raffa, MSW, Chief Policy and Advocacy Officer, Planned Parenthood Southern New England: Gretchen Raffa and Planned Parenthood of Southern New England support this legislation because all deserve access to healthcare as a basic human right. They believe that this legislation must be passed now before these rights are further encroached upon by the federal government and in other states. Lack of reproductive healthcare puts the lives of women at risk, and failure to act could lead to women dying due to lack of reproductive care in this state. CT must establish itself as a safe haven for these rights.

Dr. Audrey Hla, Resident OBGYN, Hartford Hospital, UConn Health Center: Dr. Hla supports this legislation because she and her colleagues have seen an influx in patients traveling to CT from other states to receive gender-affirming and reproductive care. Dr. Hla believes that this legislation will ensure the state continues to take all measures possible to protect CT's gender-affirming and reproductive care as this will protect far more than just the residents of CT.

Dr. Angel Foster, Massachusetts Medication Abortion Access Project: Dr. Foster supports this legislation because they believe CT should join Massachusetts in passing a comprehensive Shield law that further protects clinicians who provide abortion care through telemedicine to patients out of state. Enacting a stronger shield law can lead the way for other states to pass similar legislation and counter the federal attack on abortion and gender-affirming care.

Dr. Lisa Perriera, Medical Director, The Women's Centers, Hartford GYN Center:

Dr. Perriera supports this legislation because it will ensure that the state remains committed to protecting healthcare practitioners in enabling them to provide gender-affirming and reproductive care. With abortion and gender-affirming care under attack around the country, CT can protect its residents and patients elsewhere by strengthening telemedicine provisions.

Amanda Rostkowski, MD, PhD, Women's Health CT: Dr. Rostkowski is in support of this legislation because she has witnessed the significant, positive, life changing impact gender-affirming care has on people seeking to transition. Access to these types of care also lowers suicide rates and raises quality of life for transgender youth. She believes that lack of access to reproductive and gender-affirming care will especially harm marginalized communities.

Dr. Cara Delaney: Dr. Delaney supports this legislation because it will ensure the state continues to do everything in its power to protect CT providers and access to essential reproductive care and gender-affirming care. By strengthening CT's Reproductive Freedom Defense Act and the state's shield protections, CT will be able to offer a critical layer of defense for its health care workers.

Dr. Alana Coscia: Dr. Coscia is in support of this legislation because the ease of access and availability of gender-affirming care and reproductive healthcare significantly improves mental health and can even help to prevent suicide.

Dr. Kristin Newton: Dr. Newton supports this legislation because the persecution of physicians can have a serious impact upon the industry that will lead to the deterioration of care and the departure of professionals from the field. She believes that this legislation is necessary for doctors to uphold their oath which calls for not allowing gender or identity to stand in the way of treating a patient, and legislation to the contrary would force doctors into withholding care from transgenders or women due to fear of legal repercussions.

Dr. Priya Phulwani: Dr. Phulwani supports this legislation because it will ensure this state continues to pave the way for LGBT and reproductive rights. At this time, the rights of several groups are being eroded which is preventing doctors from administering and patients receiving lifesaving healthcare, and the provisions protecting telehealth will help this legislation reach far beyond CT.

Dr. Leigh Kowalski, OBGYN: Dr. Kowalski supports this legislation because they believe that this law would help to ensure that everyone will be able to make decisions about their bodies and their futures and access to the care they need. Dr. Kowalski shares they treated a patient who came from a southern state for an abortion. This legislation would protect individuals from other states where abortions are not legal.

Dr. Peggy Ku, OBGYN: Dr. Ku supports this legislation because protecting providers' rights to treat patients is crucial for the wellbeing of women and the gender queer communities. She believes that legislation targeting abortion access is killing women, and that it could be killing transgender youth who die by suicide due to lack of gender-affirming treatment.

Dr. Gordon Weiss, MD, Yale University School of Medicine: Dr. Weiss supports this legislation because it protects the ability of clinicians to provide access to what can be lifesaving care. He has witnessed the life changing, lifesaving impacts gender-affirming care

has on individuals and believes that this state must ensure its protections against politically motivated threats of legal action driven by out of state actors towards healthcare.

Andrea Contreras, MD.: Dr. Contreras supports this legislation because it is an opportunity for the state to bolster its existing shield law to provide further protections for practitioners who treat patients in other states by telemedicine. She believes that patients are the experts in their own lives and providers are the medical experts, and this relationship should not be subject to government interference.

Gina Novick, PhD, Lecturer, Yale School of Nursing: Gina Novick supports this legislation because it will empower CT's providers to reach beyond our state via telemedicine to provide gender-affirming and reproductive care to patients in states where it is banned.

Christy Olezeski, PhD, Yale School of Medicine: Christy Olezeski supports this legislation because it will enable CT's healthcare workers to provide medically essential care to patients in states where these rights are under attack. They believe it is wrong for politics to get involved with decisions related to personal healthcare.

Diana Lombardi, MSW: Diana Lombardi supports this legislation because as a transgender individual who struggled to obtain gender-affirming care, they hope to see these rights protected for the next generation.

Alexandra Solomon, LCSW (multiple states): Alexandra Solomon supports this legislation because it will enable her to continue providing gender-affirming care without the fear of having to stop practicing and close her business because of bigotry based attacks.

Irwin Krieger, CSW (Retired): Irwin Krieger supports this legislation because it will ensure that the state does everything in its power to protect CT's healthcare workers from legal repercussions for practicing medically necessary gender-affirming and reproductive care. They have experienced the life changing impact these treatments have on individuals, and believes that providers must be protected in providing them.

Leslie Cenci, APRN, UU Congregation, Westport: Leslie Cenci supports this legislation because everyone should have the right to make decisions about their own bodies and healthcare to maintain the healthy lifestyle they desire, and that the state must take further action to prevent attacks on information and the scientific method doctors use to practice care. She hopes to see this state fulfil its responsibility to protect all people seeking healthcare.

Jamie Krzmarzick, Nurse Practitioner: Jamie Krzmarzick supports this legislation because it will offer an additional layer of protection for people of her profession and the people they care for. She believes that these laws will especially serve to protect POCs and other even further marginalized groups beyond just transgenders.

Heather Page, VP, HR, Nuvance Health: Heather Page supports this legislation because gender-affirming care is a necessity and it will allow transgender people to grow into physically and mentally healthy adults, as did her daughter. She believes that safe, accessible healthcare will be less burdensome on the healthcare system, and that no one's ability to access healthcare should depend on where they live.

Liz Gustafson, Connecticut State Director, Reproductive Equity Now: Liz Gustafson supports this legislation because all people deserve access to quality healthcare. The protections for providers to practice reproductive care via telemedicine are essential in ensuring women around the rest of the country have access to abortions. She believes it is more important now than ever because state policy trends indicate that bodily autonomy is under attack and CT must act now before it is too late.

Hannah Hussey, Esq., Staff Attorney, GLAD Law: Hannah Hussey supports this legislation because it will prevent the restriction of gender-affirming care and ensure protections for providers. This will enable transgender youth to live thriving, happy and healthy lives. This bill is an opportunity for the state to show its commitment to supporting the LGBT community.

Mallory Sanchez, Esq., Staff Attorney, Center for Children's Advocacy: Mallory Sanchez supports this legislation because it expands protections to healthcare workers who provide for patients in other states via telemedicine. It is important to protect this because telehealth is safe and is the only option for many in other states to obtain reproductive or gender-affirming healthcare. Telehealth also reduces the financial and geographic barriers many may face when trying to receive care, and this will predominantly impact those already living in poverty.

Jess Zaccagnino, Policy Counsel, ACLU CT: Jess Zaccagnino supports this legislation because everyone deserves access to gender-affirming and reproductive care on the timeline and by the provider of their choice. The improved protections for providers who practice via telemedicine are crucial given the attempts to restrict access to these types of care. These provisions will set a precedent of protecting civil liberties and freedom for all. This law is more important now than ever given federal and state attacks on these civil liberties throughout the country.

Matthew Blinstrubas, Executive Director, Equality Connecticut: Matthew Blinstrubas supports this legislation because it would protect practitioners for providing lifesaving gender-affirming and reproductive care and prevent the further weaponization of the legal system. He hopes to see this state establish itself as a leader in protecting healthcare.

Ravi Sankar, Pastoral Care Chaplain, Unitarian Universalist Church: Ravi Sankar supports this legislation because of the significant support from esteemed medical establishments and organizations. This legislation would take proactive measures to counter federal overreach and prevent the Trump administration's destructive and regressive agendas to erase CT's progressive legacy.

Meredith Bailey, Serenity Wellness LLC: Meredith Bailey supports this legislation because her practice will continue providing gender-affirming care despite other larger practices getting rid of these programs. She experiences the impact restrictions around the country on this care is having on members of the LGBTQ+ community and she believes this bill will protect larger practices from fear of lawsuits and will enable them to better provide care.

Braedyn Inmon, LPC-A, Growth Therapy CT Music Therapy: Braedyn Inmon supports this legislation because access to quality gender-affirming care significantly contributes to

their quality of life as a transgender person. Access to this healthcare is also essential as a provider to improve the quality of life of their clients they work with.

Kim Westmoreland, Growth Therapy LLC.: Kim Westmoreland supports this legislation because it is crucial to the health and wellbeing of the community. She is witness to the fear many who need lifesaving care are experiencing amid the attacks on reproductive and gender-affirming care. She believes that reduced access to this care will increase anxiety and depression among those who need it.

Kate Ames, Art Therapist: Kate Ames supports this legislation because access to gender-affirming care is essential to mental, emotional, and physical well-being of those in need of it and is a human right. She has witnessed how gender-affirming care saves lives, so protections to these lifesaving treatments is crucial for both clinicians and patients.

Jennifer Suski, Practitioner: Jennifer Suski supports this legislation because all people deserve access to gender-affirming and reproductive care. She believes that this state must do what it can to protect practitioners and enable them to provide for patients. She has witnessed the significant, positive, life changing impact gender-affirming care has on an individual and hopes to see it protected.

Michael Jacobson, Congregation B'nai Israel: Michael Jacobson supports this legislation because it will ensure the state protects the rights to gender-affirming and reproductive care. He believes that this state must be on the right side of history against the current federal campaign seeking to take away those rights.

Sarah W., Hartford Jewish Organizing Collective: Sarah supports this legislation because it will ensure protections to gender-affirming care for her 7-year-old child. She believes that the state must protect healthcare professionals in practicing and providing gender-affirming care, which is attacked by being misrepresented as mutilation when it is well-established science.

Jeffrey Schwartz: Jeffrey Schwartz supports this legislation because it will help to protect health care providers and those seeking access to health care services, including abortion. This can especially go to help those of lower income communities seeking abortions.

Melinda Morrison: Melinda Morrison supports this legislation because gender-affirming care made a significant, positive impact in the life of her daughter who has gone on to live a very full life. Her daughter now lives in fear of losing access to this care and it gives her and her partner severe anxiety.

Jessica Hill: Jessica Hill supports this legislation because it will protect abortion and gender-affirming care providers from out of state persecution when providing care via telehealth. This will enable practitioners to provide care beyond CT, to states where healthcare access is falling under attack.

Karen Walsh: Karen Walsh supports this legislation because it ensures protections for public health by maintaining the appropriate standards of care for all CT residents, including transgenders.

Laura Williamson: Laura Williamson supports this legislation because it strengthens protections for gender-affirming and reproductive for doctors who practice using telehealth.

Betsy Yagla: Betsy Yagla supports this legislation because it enables everyone to make their own decisions about their bodies and their own healthcare. This state can protect its own residents from attacks on healthcare and can also enable healthcare professionals to provide care to patients in other states via telemedicine.

Cheryl Tourigny: Cheryl Tourigny supports this legislation because it ensures protections for public health by enabling providers to do their jobs without threat of legal challenges which ensures access to top quality healthcare for residents of CT.

Todd Victoria: Todd Victoria supports this legislation because it is essential in ensuring safe, equitable and legally protected access to gender-affirming and reproductive care. He believes this state must lead the way in protecting patient autonomy, ensure provider security and uphold the state's dedication to these values.

Deana Paqua: Deana Paqua supports this legislation because everyone deserves bodily autonomy and to make their own healthcare decisions. She has witnessed the suffering experienced due to lack of reproductive and gender-affirming care and believes the state must protect at risk individuals in need of these types of care.

Ellen Thomson: Ellen Thomson supports this legislation because it will ensure the state does everything possible to protect this state's healthcare professionals to provide reproductive and gender-affirming care to patients. She believes that access to gender-affirming care has made a significant, positive difference in the lives of the transgender people she knows and that they must continue to be able to access their desired care.

Josh Taylor: Josh Taylor supports this legislation because access to gender-affirming care made a significant, positive difference in their quality of life. They believe that restrictions to gender-affirming care is an existential threat to the safety of the trans community, and that the medical world has widely accepted this, so the state must act.

Karen Reddington: Karen Reddington supports this legislation because the shield law is vital in ensuring providers who practice reproductive and gender-affirming care here in CT can continue to practice and protected from lawsuits from other states.

Leona Kelly: Leona Kelly supports this legislation because gender-affirming care has made a significant, positive difference in their life. They, along with the rest of the transgender community, are terrified and exhausted by the attacks and pushback they have faced at the federal level and other states around the country which they see as an attempt to erase them.

Lisa LaBelle: Lisa LaBelle supports this legislation because it is critical that the state protects doctors and patients for practicing or receiving reproductive and gender-affirming healthcare, human dignity. She believes that the state must act now and take precautionary measures given the attacks on these types of care at the federal and state levels around the country.

Jane Johansen: Jane Johansen supports this legislation because it is crucial in ensuring equitable access to healthcare. Since gender-affirming and reproductive care are both lifesaving, this legislation saves lives by ensuring doctors can practice as necessary while also reducing the stigma around these types of care.

Jasper Hollander: Jasper Hollander supports this legislation because as a trans person, they've found it more difficult to continue their gender-affirming care which has made their life quite difficult. They believe no one should have to decide between discontinuing treatment or continuing illegitimate treatment, like the decision they are faced with currently, if the state fails to act and provide protections.

Anne Lampert: Anne Lampert supports this legislation because it is important that the state remains a leader in protecting reproductive health services and gender-affirming care for the rest of the country.

Shannon Mykins: Shannon Mykins supports this legislation because those who provide gender-affirming care save lives. She believes that this bill will benefit the residents of CT and the state's reputation as a state that protects the rights of its residents.

Ros Kish-Levine: Ros Kish-Levine supports this legislation because people deserve to have autonomy over their own bodies and this law is a direct attack to that.

Suzanne Montagne: Suzanne Montagne supports this legislation because everyone should have the right to their choice of healthcare, whether it be gender-affirming or reproductive. This bill is necessary in protecting doctors and providers from being used as pawns to try and insert dominance over society through fascist ideology.

Serena Lee: Serena Lee supports this legislation because access to excellent gynecological care made a significant, positive impact on her life. She believes that laws attempting to restrict access to gender-affirming and reproductive care can cost lives and puts providers at risk, which can influence quality of care.

Nancy Crocker: Nancy Crocker supports this legislation because it takes steps to protect both patients and doctors by clearly defining essential medical services, strengthens confidentiality measures and shields providers for doing their jobs. She believes that no one should be denied crucial healthcare due to political interference.

Travis Hardy: Travis Hardy supports this legislation because it will ensure CT's healthcare providers are protected to provide essential reproductive and gender-affirming care to patients. The attacks on healthcare will predominantly target marginalized communities, and the state must enact these laws to protect everyone, but most especially communities affected by inequality.

Megan Westmoreland: Megan Westmoreland supports this legislation because practitioners who provide gender-affirming care must be protected in this state. She believes that the federal government has no right to police an individual's healthcare decisions because of transphobic and misogynistic biases.

Amanda Duerk: Amanda Duerk supports this legislation because patients deserve to receive medical care that aligns with best practices for their personal health needs, and doctors must not be penalized for providing evidence-based treatment.

Jacquelyn Eaton: Jacquelyn Eaton supports this legislation because healthcare providers in CT must be protected from legal challenges for providing reproductive and gender-affirming care, which is a right for all.

Patrick "Pax" Crowley: Pax Crowley supports this legislation because access to proper gender-affirming care has been key in their mental and physical health. They believe that reproductive care falls under the same umbrella and that all must be protected because people have a right to healthcare, and practitioners have a duty to provide healthcare informed by science and medical expertise.

Raya Zimon: Raya Zimon supports this legislation because it will save the lives of transgender individuals and will support practitioners in providing proper reproductive healthcare. She believes that CT must do what it can to protect the rights to healthcare and that this bill benefits all.

Jesse Toth-Henderson: Jesse Toth-Henderson supports this legislation because the laws in other states restricting gender-affirming and reproductive care are preventing providers from practicing lifesaving care which is costing lives. Restriction to this care is a violation of human rights.

Sam Victoria: Sam Victoria supports this legislation because nobody should be denied medically necessary healthcare due to political interference and no provider should face punishment for providing care legal under existing CT law.

Heather Victory: Heather Victory supports this legislation because providers practicing medically essential care should be protected under law from unjust legal and professional consequences imposed by other states. CT can protect these rights in state and can potentially lead the way for other states.

Rachel Wainwright: Rachel Wainwright supports this legislation because access to high quality gender-affirming and reproductive care significantly and positively changed her life. Reproductive and gender-affirming care are used to treat many medical conditions. She has also witnessed the life changing effects transitioning can have on a person.

Gavin Watson: Gavin Watson supports this legislation because it ensures legal protections for crucial healthcare.

Margot Weiss: Margot Weiss supports this legislation because it protects the human rights of gender-affirming and reproductive care. She hopes this state will oppose unlawful government overreach at the federal level attempting to ban these types of care. She is terrified for those in her life who rely on gender-affirming care who are faced with leaving the state and even the county.

Irene Skrybailo: Irene Skrybailo supports this legislation because people should be able to make their own decisions about their own bodies and their futures and access to the care they need to live. She believes the government should not interfere in these matters.

Heather Swanson: Heather Swanson supports this legislation because using estrogen blockers is crucial in her treatment and prevention of breast cancer.

Azalea Tesauero: Azalea Tesauero supports this legislation because they believe that the idea of a healthcare provider facing penalties for providing care is an attack on the human rights of the LGBT community, specifically those who are transgender.

Sarah Alfieri: Sarah Alfieri supports this legislation because it fights gender-based discrimination and cruelty.

Kyler Allen: Kyler Allen supports this legislation because healthcare providers must be enabled to provide critical patient care. He believes that restrictions to these types of care can cost lives.

Jacqueline Masumian: Jacqueline Masumian supports this legislation because medical providers should be protected for doing their jobs.

Daniel McAdam: Daniel McAdam supports this legislation because this state must protect the rights of individuals to make personal healthcare decisions and doctors to practice care, a basic human right because it is in everyone's best interest.

Mac Romine: Mac Romine supports this legislation because access to gender-affirming care significantly affects their life as a trans masculine person. With the rights to this care on the line they believe it is crucial for the state legislature to protect them.

Julianne Magrath: Julianne Magrath supports this legislation because they feel everyone deserves the right to reproductive and gender-affirming care because it is very well established, peer reviewed science and doctors should have the right to practice such.

Laura Minor: Laura Minor supports this legislation because she believes the state must offer the strongest protections possible for patients and providers who offer reproductive care, and that CT must reassure women and their providers that the state must honor the right to make a choice about whether or not to get an abortion.

Emily Matava: Emily Matava supports this legislation because it protects transgender peoples' access to medically necessary gender-affirming care. They believe this bill is an important step in protecting the transgender community's rights from federal barring.

William Hooper: William Hooper supports this legislation because he believes that CT medical providers must be legally protected when they provide necessary care, or else clinicians will stop practicing. He also believes that it is crucial the state exercises its autonomy over its own laws or else that power will disappear.

Timothy Gabriele: Timothy Gabriele supports this legislation because it would expand CT's Reproductive Freedom Defense Act, effectively one of the nation's first shield laws. They

believe this protects the fundamental right to an abortion and can set a precedent that would lead to other states adopting similar legislation.

Tahj Galberth: Tahj Galberth supports this legislation because access to gender-affirming care prevented them from suicide. They believe this bill would protect people who have no other option than to come to this state to receive gender-affirming care and would show other states that being transgender should not be criminalized, and that doctors will not be punished for practicing.

Patrick Dunham: Patrick Dunham is in support of this legislation because gender-affirming care is necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of transgender individuals.

Melissa Hollander: Melissa Hollander supports this legislation because she believes that her son is currently being denied gender-affirming care from a provider out of fear of legal retribution. She finds this unacceptable as all people have the right to health care.

Amber Johansen: Amber Johansen supports this legislation because she wants to see CT do everything in its power to protect providers of reproductive and gender-affirming care. Since reproductive and gender-affirming care are peer-reviewed and well-researched, they believe any attempt to paint doctors who provide this type of care as agents of radical ideology to be ridiculous.

Archie Crouse: Archie Crouse is in support of this legislation because gender-affirming care has made a significant, positive impact on their life. They believe that a lack of gender-affirming care could cost lives, as they nearly took their life due to gender dysphoria, which they treated with such drugs.

Claire Greene: Claire Greene supports this legislation because she moved her family here from VA with hopes of a better lifestyle for her trans child, and she found it. Her child has thrived living in this state thanks to the professionals who provide for her child, and believes that these professionals should feel safe in providing this type of care.

Drew Keefer: Drew Keefer supports this legislation because he is mortified by the movements to ban gender-affirming and reproductive health care motivated by hate. He believes that these movements seek to violate the human rights of individuals seeking gender-affirming care and abortions and that we must fight for the sake of future generations.

Scott Guertin: Scott Guertin supports this legislation because it is essential in ensuring that trans people are treated with basic dignity by protecting access to critical services and support that they need in the face of bigoted ideology.

Ashley Baker: Ashley Baker supports this legislation because she believes that by strengthening CT's Reproductive Freedom Defense Act and the state's shield protections with added protections for telehealth providers, CT will be able to offer a critical layer of defense for its reproductive health care work force.

Amber Gladi: Amber Gladi supports this legislation because access to gender-affirming care is essential to her physical and mental wellbeing, and to that of other transgender individuals in the state.

Margaret Gaines: Margaret Gains supports this legislation because excellent reproductive care saved her life and enabled her to continue to have children. She hopes this legislation will protect practitioners who provide lifesaving reproductive care because women will die without it.

Kathleen Freed: Kathleen Freed supports this legislation because it ensures safe, equitable and legally protected access to reproductive and gender-affirming care in CT. She believes that CT must lead the way in protecting these fundamental human rights because no one should be denied access to legal healthcare.

Barbara Edinberg: Barbara Edinberg supports this legislation because it will ensure the state will do everything in its power to protect CT's healthcare providers from prosecution, including those who provide telehealth services. She believes that CT is a beacon of hope for reproductive and gender-affirming care and we must remain one.

Enzo Jackson: Enzo Jackson supports this legislation because they have used gender-affirming care and reproductive care and it positively changed their life. They know multiple people who have already lost access to care by providers who fear for repercussions, and they are very disturbed.

Ryan Boroway: Ryan Boroway supports this legislation because he believes medical professionals who provide gender-affirming and reproductive care should not fear retribution or retaliation for providing lifesaving treatment. As some providers are already beginning to withdraw from providing care preemptively, this is incredibly timely.

Al Burgeson: Al Burgeson supports this legislation because gender-affirming care has made a significant positive impact on their life. They believe that everyone should have choice within their own bodily autonomy and gender-affirming/reproductive care is a necessity in doing such, protecting the queer community.

Lincoln Carroll: Lincoln Carroll supports this legislation because they believe that transgender people should be allowed to live fulfilling lives in the bodies they want and allowing them to receive gender-affirming care is a necessity. Access to gender-affirming care can also be a significant factor in preventing a youth struggling with gender dysphoria from taking their life.

Margaret Aguirre: Margaret Aguirre supports this legislation because it will ensure the state will continue to do everything in its power to protect CT's healthcare providers. By strengthening CT's Reproductive Freedom Defense Act and our state's shield protections with these added provisions for telehealth providers, CT will be able to offer a critical layer of defense for its reproductive health care workforce.

Ezra Blanchard: Ezra Blanchard is in support of this legislation because of the positive impact gender-affirming care has had on their life. they believe that if the state does not protect these freedoms in the CT state constitution, they will be banned at the federal level and will enable the government to further marginalize the LGBT community.

Ben Pelletier: Ben Pelletier supports this legislation because access to excellent gender-affirming care helped them transition into a happy man. Continued access to this high-quality care is essential to their physical and mental health.

Robert Blank: Robert Blank supports this legislation because he believes that this state must do everything in its power to become a beacon of freedom for reproductive and gender-affirming healthcare and that to do so, we must protect providers who practice via telehealth.

Moira Cloud: Moira Cloud is in support of this legislation because access to gender-affirming care has made a significant positive difference in their life and prevented them from suicide. They also believe that the restriction of abortion access will just lead to the endangerment of lives of women who seek them by alternative means, and that everyone has the right to bodily autonomy and the doctors who provide this type of care should be protected.

Ashley Gulyas: Ashley Gulyas supports this legislation because it will ensure the state continues to do everything in its power to protect the healthcare providers from providing essential reproductive and gender-affirming care to patients. They believe that everyone should have the right to make their own medical decisions and this law will protect that right.

Richard Nelson: Richard Nelson supports this legislation because it would strengthen the state's shield law to ensure that CT's abortion and gender-affirming care practitioners are safe from out of state prosecution when providing care via telehealth because healthcare is a human right. He is alarmed by the attacks on the LGBT community going on in other states and does not want to see that happen here.

Drew Greene: Drew Greene supports this legislation because gender-affirming care saved their life. They believe that everyone should have access to this care as it is a right, not a privilege.

Kelly Hernsdorf: Kelly Hernsdorf is in support of this legislation because she is the mother of two transgender children. She has witnessed firsthand the positive lifesaving impact gender-affirming care can have on children and believes that access to this care is a basic human right. This law would provide an additional layer of protection for abortion providers, who also provide care that is a fundamental human right.

Angela Hornung: Angela Hornung supports this legislation because access to excellent gender-affirming care saved their life. She further believes that trans individuals can be very productive and contribute much to society, that CT can generate more tax revenue from a wave of citizens moving here for healthcare, and that it sends a powerful message to the federal government.

Evelyn Coutts-LaFrance: Evelyn Coutts-LaFrance supports this legislation because access to gender-affirming care and expert doctors is crucial to them as a trans person.

Evelyn Landau: Evelyn Landau supports this legislation because attacks to gender-affirming and reproductive care are unconstitutional and attacks on science and medicine.

Benjamin Berthiaume: Benjamin Berthiaume supports this legislation because access to quality gender-affirming care significantly, positively improved their life. They believe gender-

affirming care saves the lives of those suffering from gender dysphoria and that it must be accessible to all.

Riley Singleton: Riley Singleton supports this legislation because she is terrified of losing the right to reproductive healthcare. She has also witnessed firsthand the positive, life changing impact that gender-affirming care can have on individuals, how it can prevent and even eliminate suicidal ideation in transgender individuals and believes that these rights must be protected.

Adam Callaghan: Adam Callaghan supports this legislation because no one deserves to be put at risk for seeking or providing gender-affirming and reproductive care, and CT must ensure these freedoms.

Maddy Leo: Maddy Leo supports this legislation because gender-affirming care is incredibly important for mental health and self-expression of transgender youth. She also believes that women must have access to reproductive care as everyone has the right to do as they please with their own bodies and reproductive care is essential to that.

Ellie Collins: Ellie Collins supports this legislation out of love for the women and transgender individuals in her life and the desire for their safety. She is hopeful that the state will continue to prioritize health and safety over greed and money so citizens of the most marginalized communities can continue to get the healthcare they need to live their best lives.

Leslie Blank: Leslie Blank supports this legislation because it acts to oppose attacks on women by other states. She is fearful that if this bill does not pass, it marks the end of rule of law and democracy in this state, and around the country.

Riley S.: Riley is in support of this legislation because gender-affirming care prevented them from suicide. Riley went on to serve 20 years in the military and believes they must continue the fight for freedom. Riley also points out the very low regret rate for undergoing a transition.

Erin and Patty R.: Erin and Patty support this legislation because it will serve to protect the basic human right to healthcare from attacks by the federal government.

Marcy: Marcy is in support of this legislation because they believe that gender-affirming and reproductive care can save lives. They believe that the state must empower providers and ensure their safety to practice, and that there should be protections for telehealth providers to care for patients out of state.

Abigail: Abigail supports this legislation because she has witnessed the positive, life changing and lifesaving impact gender-affirming care providers and hopes that it is protected in this state. She believes that the many trans people she knows should not have to suffer through lack of access to this care, like her brother, who lived with severe gender dysphoria before transitioning.

Lucy: Lucy supports this legislation because she is terrified that she will lose access to the gender-affirming care she needs. She believes that current laws attempting to restrict access to gender-affirming and reproductive care is undue influence by the state in an individual's private bodily autonomy, and that doctors must be protected to practice these types of care.

Anonymous Doctor: This anonymous doctor submitted testimony in support of this legislation because they believe that health care providers should not have to be afraid to do their job, which sometimes constitutes providing reproductive care to women.

Anonymous Therapist: This anonymous therapist supports this legislation because they fear legal challenges for providing care to clients. She believes she must be free to treat patients as necessary.

Anonymous Therapist: This anonymous therapist is in support of this legislation because of the impact it has on the quality of healthcare providers in this state. They now operate under fear of legal repercussions. This further harms the communities these therapists seek to help and leave the vulnerable more at risk.

Anonymous Healthcare Provider: This anonymous healthcare provider is in support of this legislation because they've witnessed that suicidal ideation among transgender youth is especially high, and hormone treatments significantly reduce this, making it lifesaving care. They believe we must protect providers from harassment and legal threats in providing this life saving care.

Anonymous Licensed Professional Counselor: This anonymous licensed professional counselor supports this legislation because it opposes the threats providers in other states are facing for practicing certain types of care. This counselor hopes to provide care in the states they are licensed via telemedicine which includes multiple states they are licensed in. Working with transgender youth, they witnessed the lifesaving impact gender-affirming care can provide, and fears the impact of further attacks on this care.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony supports this legislation because they believe doctors have a duty to serve and care for their patients. They believe that although malpractice and negligence should be liable to litigation, providers must be protected in administering reproductive and gender-affirming care despite bigoted attempts to stop it.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony supports this legislation because they moved to CT since attacks on hormone therapy in FL made access to transgender care nearly impossible. They hope to see it protected in CT, or else they will have to move again.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony supports this legislation because doctors must be protected to provide lifesaving care. Access to gender-affirming care made a significant positive difference in their life, preventing them from suicide. They believe reproductive care must also be protected, especially because of instances of rape and life-threatening conditions.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony is submitted in support of this legislation because everyone should have access to the healthcare they need without government interference. They believe that states must take the lead in preserving access to certain types of healthcare, and telemedicine will enable them to provide lifesaving care in CT and states where it is under attack around the country.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony is submitted in support of this legislation because of the positive impact gender-affirming care has had on their own life. They hope to see the committee work to ensure that CT remains a bastion of medical excellence by protecting healthcare providers from attacks on their lives.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony is submitted in support of this legislation because they feel it is crucial for this blue state to protect the vulnerable and protect access to healthcare.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony supports this legislation anonymously due to fear of retaliation for their testimony. They fear for the future of the transgender community, and they believe this bill will provide protections. Access to the fundamental right of gender-affirming care prevented them from taking their life, and they believe losing it would be a death sentence.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony is in support of this legislation because CT must continue to be a healthcare haven for women and transgender individuals. They believe no one should be denied access to care based on their identity.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony supports this legislation because access to a safe abortion saved their life after a fatal pregnancy complication. She believes that the decision to undergo an abortion as well as gender-affirming care should be left up to individuals and their practitioners, with no government interference because it is a matter of freedom, and life and death.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony supports this legislation because it is crucial that this state protects access to reproductive care when it is under attack in very many states. They believe that traveling to these states could be a matter of life and death in the event of a potentially fatal pregnancy complication.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony supports this legislation because trans rights are human rights. Attacks on healthcare care are attacks on freedom, a sacred American principle.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony supports this legislation because lack of gender-affirming care created a terrible quality of life for them. Access to gender-affirming care turned their life around for the best and they believe everyone should have access to it.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony supports this legislation because access to a safe abortion after an unwanted pregnancy enabled him and his partner to live their lives the way they wanted to. They have also witnessed the difference gender-affirming care can make in individuals, turning them into healthy, functioning people who contribute significantly to society.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony supports this legislation because medical professionals should be protected from providing patients with medically necessary care. They believe that this state must listen to the medical professionals who have dedicated their lives to this field and that they must be enabled to provide care at their discretion.

Anonymous: This piece of testimony is submitted in support of this legislation because she believes birth control is essential healthcare that people have the right to and has many advantages beyond preventing pregnancy, so it must be protected in our constitution. They also believe that banning gender-affirming care will have a serious negative impact on the mental health of those who identify as transgender, even young adults.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony is submitted in support of this legislation because of the positive impact safe, legal reproductive healthcare had on their life. They believe that all should have access to the same type of care this individual received because of just how much it had helped them live the life they hoped to live.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony supports this legislation because attacks on gender-affirming and reproductive care put patients and providers at risk.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony supports this legislation because doctors must be protected from legal actions for providing lifesaving gender-affirming care.

Anonymous: This anonymous piece of testimony is submitted in support of this legislation because they want healthcare protections ensured so the future generations won't look elsewhere for it in other states.

5 Anonymous Doctors: These anonymous doctors support this legislation because it will protect providers while doing their jobs and provide reproductive care to women.

Francine Crystal, Zachary Gray, Erik Kuranko, Anonymous 2:
The above also submitted testimony in support of this legislation.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Robert Hale, Esq.: Robert Hale opposes this legislation because it is retaliatory towards CT's sister states. He is strongly opposed to reproductive healthcare, whether it be abortions, which he sees as elective murder of unborn children, and he sees assisted reproduction as enslavement of poor women. He is also strongly opposed to gender-affirming care in this state.

Jeff Cleghorn, Esq.: Jeff Cleghorn opposes this legislation because the state must take action to prevent the transgender lobbying efforts by radical activists from promoting discredited science to influence state policy. He believes that no additional legal protections should be granted to doctors shielding them from liability because it only benefits the trans medical profit industry.

Leslie Wolfgang, Director of Public Policy, Family Institute of Connecticut: Leslie Wolfgang opposes this legislation because of the language changes surrounding "fertility" and "assisted reproduction" because it includes surrogacy. They believe that some of the stipulations surrounding gender-affirming care in the Shield law were passed without public input. They find gender-affirming care problematic because they estimate a 30% detransition rate and that this law will endanger children.

Mona Colwell, State Leader, Intercessors for America: Mona Colwell is opposed to this legislation because it dangerously expands the framework for irreversible gender-affirming procedures on children. They believe that gender-affirming procedures should constitute genital mutilation and should be classified as a Class D felony.

Chris Barrett, Gays Against Groomers: Chris Barrett opposes this legislation because it addresses the issue of advancing disturbing ideology that harms vulnerable kids around the country. He believes that trans rights are being pushed by the transgender and woke lobbyists pushing their own agenda that is harmful to kids.

Jackie Homan, Greenwich Patriots: Jackie Homan is opposed to this legislation because she believes this state must not enable medical professionals to mutilate children chemically and surgically, and that CT must align itself with President Trump's executive order.

Steven Bartlett: Steven Bartlett is opposed to this legislation because he does not want taxpayer dollars going to supporting reproductive and gender-affirming health care because he does not see it as medically necessary.

Elle Palmer: Elle Palmer is opposed to this legislation because of a bad transition experience. She does not believe that transitioning should be recommended to people due to the possibility of regret and then the need to detransition. She was appalled by the lack of detransition care available to her once she made her decision.

Richard Clavet: Richard Clavet opposes this legislation because they do not believe tax dollars should be used for gender-affirming and reproductive care.

R.J. Preece: R.J. Preece opposes this legislation because the state must reject the influence by the transqueer lobby which pushes discredited science to fight for laws that protect the gender-affirming care industry which is worth billions of dollars.

Christine Rebstock: Christine Rebstock opposes this legislation because they believe it seeks to protect and support the harming of children, LGB and women. They hope to see this state oppose transqueer lobbying efforts by activists in an effort to support the gender-affirming healthcare industry.

Simon Amaya Price: Simon Amaya Price is opposed to this legislation because he transitioned from male to female, then de-transitioned from female back to male. He believes that because of this, gender-affirming care should not be an option for minors. He acquaints transgenderism to an escape hatch.

Katherine Sarris: Katherine Sarris opposes this legislation because she is skeptical of all research that supports the use of gender-affirming care. She believes that gender-affirming care will marginalize the female population and poses significant danger to children.

Barbara Fairbanks: Barbara Fairbanks opposes this legislation because the state must raise the age requirements for an individual to receive gender-affirming care. She believes that it is reckless to be teaching children about this in elementary schools, and that the children must be thought about first.

Nicolas Smith: Nicholas Smith opposes this legislation because parents should have the ability to prevent their child from undergoing a transition. He believes that most kids who seek to transition will eventually change their minds if told no.

S. Yule: S. Yule opposes this legislation because they feel that the public was cut out of the legislative process when it came to legal protections of doctors in the Shield law. They speculate that 30% of transitioners detransition due to doctors taking advantage of vulnerable children, and that doctors should be liable for harm caused.

Anonymous: This anonymous testimony opposes this legislation because they believe that gender dysphoria is a mental illness, and that transitioning should not be allowed due to the mental instability that is gender dysphoria.

Anonymous: This anonymous testimony opposes this legislation because they believe that gender-affirming care constitutes genital mutilation and that this should result in severe penalty under law, including the death penalty.

The below individuals also submitted testimony in general opposition to HB7135:

Dr. Linda Dalessio

Beverly Allen

Susan Bradford

Mike Santangelo

Reported by: Griffin Olshan

Date: April 15, 2025