



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on November 12, 2012

San Francisco to Offer Free “Sex Reassignment” Surgeries to Its Uninsured

The city of San Francisco has announced that it plans to cover the cost of sex-change procedures for uninsured “transgender” residents, making it the first community in the United States to offer such a service. The [Associated Press](#) reported that the city’s Health Commission voted November 6 “to create a comprehensive program for treating transgender people experiencing mental distress because of the mismatch between their bodies and their gender identities.” San Francisco already offers free hormone therapy, counseling, and other health services to individuals desiring a “sex reassignment” procedure, but up until now had not offered sex-change surgery under its universal health plan.



The plan to cover the surgery came about at the request of “transgender advocates,” who want mastectomies, genital reconstruction, and other procedures associated with sex “reassignment” covered under San Francisco’s five-year-old universal health care plan. The Health Commission bowed to pressure from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and the San Francisco-based [Transgender Law Center](#) to drop sex-change surgery from the list of procedures excluded from the city’s health plan.

“All Americans, in consultation with their doctors, should be able to receive the medical care they need to live healthy lives,” said Kristina Wertz, program director of the Transgender Law Center. “That’s why we applaud San Francisco’s decision to allow transgender people the ability to receive the medical care they need to be healthy.”

But [Thomas Moyer](#), a San Francisco resident and author of [A Conservative Survival Guide to San Francisco](#), pointed out the obvious impact the plan will have on the community. “Taxpayers cannot afford this,” he told reporters, “as there are unintended costs and unintended consequences unrelated to the actual surgery, such as their longer-term hormone treatment, psychology needs, and other longer-term health issues.”

Sex change surgeries reportedly cost about \$37,000 for a male-to-female procedure, and \$77,000 for a female-to-male surgery. The AP reported that under Mayor Ed Lee, “the city’s current budget topped \$7 billion for the first time in history this year. In addition to the local tax burden, residents have seen their cash-strapped state slash an array of services.”

Moyer noted that sex-change surgery “is not an essential health function, especially when it would be taking money away from those suffering from chronic illnesses like cancer, AIDS, and heart disease. We are already stretched too thin as San Francisco is facing a budget deficit and won’t be able to afford the costs of this.”



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Writing in [National Review Online](#), attorney and author Wesley J. Smith warned that under ObamaCare, “we will see the same thing happen on a national basis — a Free Sex Change Rule, if you will.” He explained that at its most basic element, centralized healthcare operates on the political rewards system. “Thus, the Free Birth Control Rule was promulgated to reward an important Obama political constituency and help serve as a foundation for the planned reelection ‘War on Women’ lie,” Smith wrote. “Moreover, it has become a powerful sword in the administration’s very real War on Religion that seeks to shrivel freedom of religion into a highly constrained ‘freedom of worship.’”

Beyond the cost and politics, however, are the moral and ethical issues raised by Christians and proponents of traditional values. While an individual may subject himself to surgical mutilation under the notion that he is changing his sex, he is — and will remain — the sex assigned to him by God, Christian ethicists insist. Perhaps no one knows this better than individuals who have gone through “sex reassignment” surgery only to find that they are left with the same unresolved issues they had beforehand.

In 2010, the U.K.’s [Christian Institute](#) website related the story of Charles Kane, who underwent a procedure to change his appearance to that of a woman, only to change back later, saying that he needed counseling, not surgery. “People who think they are a woman trapped in a male body are, in my opinion, completely deluded,” he said. “I certainly was.”

Photo of Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco skyline



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