



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on April 7, 2021

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## Arkansas Governor Vetoes Bill That Would Protect Children From Gender Reassignment

Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson (R) is facing backlash after vetoing a bill on Monday that would have blocked minors from receiving gender-reassignment surgeries and hormone treatments. Hutchinson claimed the legislation, which sought to protect children from overzealous “[woke](#)” parents and doctors, was an example of “vast government overreach.”

Under House Bill 1570, the Save Adolescents From Experimentation (SAFE) Act, doctors would have been prohibited from prescribing hormones and puberty blockers to minors as a treatment for gender dysphoria. The legislation would also have prohibited doctors from performing reassignment surgery on minors suffering from gender dysphoria, as well as from referring minors for gender reassignment surgeries or hormone treatments.

Photo: alexey\_ds / E+ / Getty Images Plus

Though the bill had overwhelming support in both the House and Senate, Hutchinson claims it would have created “new standards of legislative interference with physicians and parents as they deal with some of the most complex and sensitive matters involving young people.” Hutchinson said such minors should have “the guiding hand of their parents and of the health-care professionals that their family has chosen.”

“House Bill 1570 would put the state as the definitive oracle of medical care, overriding parents, patients and healthcare experts,” he said. “While in some instances the state must act to protect life, the state should not presume to jump into the middle of every medical, human and ethical issue. This would be, and is, a vast government overreach.”

Hutchinson voiced concerns that the measure did not include a grandfather clause for minors already undergoing such treatment. “The bill is overbroad, extreme, and does not grandfather those who are under hormone treatment,” said Hutchinson at a Monday news conference.

But Hutchinson’s criticisms of the measure echoed the dogma touted by the woke Left. He argued H.B. 1570 would deny the “best medical care to transgender youth” and would “lead to significant harm to the young person from suicidal tendencies and social isolation to increased drug use.”

This assertion has been contradicted in a number of studies, however. A 2016 study published in *The New Atlantis Journal* by former chief of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins Hospital and distinguished service professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University Dr. Paul McHugh and Arizona State University Professor of Statistics and Biostatistics Lawrence Mayer found that conditioning anyone to accept



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impersonation of the opposite sex via surgery or chemical influences is harmful. The authors observe that adults who choose to have sex-reassignment surgeries have “a higher risk of experiencing poor mental health outcomes.” They cite a study that found that sex-“reassigned individuals were about 5 times more likely to attempt suicide and about 19 times more likely to die by suicide.”

The authors of that study were particularly concerned with today’s medical treatment of gender dysphoria in children because it provides a permanent solution to a problem that was likely temporary. “Children are a special case when addressing transgender issues. Only a minority of children who experience cross-gender identification will continue to do so into adolescence or adulthood,” the report stated.

The authors determined there was “little evidence” to support the “therapeutic value of interventions that delay puberty or modify the secondary sex characteristics of adolescents.”

A 2017 study in *The New Atlantis* concluded that children suffering from gender dysphoria should not be treated with puberty-blocking drugs because they create additional complications. That [study](#) was also authored by McHugh and Mayer, as well as Dr. Paul Hruz, a professor at Washington University School of Medicine.

The doctors found that puberty blockers create four major problems, including prolonging gender dysphoria in children who would otherwise outgrow it.

The authors questioned the rationale behind enabling children who lack mental and emotional maturity to make significant medical decisions for themselves, stating, “We frequently hear from neuroscientists that the adolescent brain is too immature to make reliably rational decisions, but we are supposed to expect emotionally troubled adolescents to make decisions about their gender identities and about serious medical treatments at the age of 12 or younger.”

There are many more studies that disprove Hutchinson’s assertions. In response to the veto, Representative Robin Lundstrum (R), the lead sponsor of the bill, cited a 2011 study from Sweden that found people who underwent gender reassignment surgery suffered greater physical and mental health problems than the general population and were more likely to die by suicide.

And Senator Alan Clark (R) cited a study by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry that found 90 percent of young adults who experience gender dysphoria outgrow it, the *Fort Smith Times Record* reports.

Unfortunately, the scientific approach to gender dysphoria has been heavily influenced by the PC movement and as such may be resorting to harmful interventions to appease social-justice warriors. And without legislation such as the one vetoed by Hutchinson, there are few protections in place to prevent children from undergoing life-altering treatments that have the potential to worsen their mental health.

Fortunately, a simple majority is all that is necessary to override the governor’s veto in Arkansas. Hutchinson expects his veto will be overridden, the *Fort Smith Times Record* reports.



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