

21 March 2023

TESTIMONY ON HB1474 – POSITION: IN OPPOSITION TO

Relating to vital statistic collection; and relating to the definition of father, female, male, mother, and sex

TO: Chair Lee, Vice Chair Roers, and members of the Senate Human Services Committee

FROM: Meghann Reardon

My name is Meghann Reardon. I am a resident of District 21. I am submitting this testimony in opposition to HB1474 - Relating to vital statistic collection; and relating to the definition of father, female, male, mother, and sex.

I am a genetic counselor, and I have concerns about the narrowness of the definitions proposed by this legislation. The wording in this bill excludes not only transgender individuals but also intersex individuals and individuals with disorders of sexual development. Defining “female” as someone “whose biological reproductive system is developed to produce ova” limits the definition of a woman to the presence or absence of functioning ovaries. This ignores the existence of individuals with external female sex characteristics who were born without ovaries or who have nonfunctioning ovaries. There are similar limitations to the proposed definition of “male.”

Additionally, the majority of individuals do not know their sex chromosomes with certainty. Congenital sex chromosome abnormalities occur in more than 1 in 500 births. There are genetic conditions, such as androgen insensitivity syndrome and Swyer syndrome, which cause individuals who have a Y chromosome to develop as, and often identify as, girls. Conditions, like 46, XX testicular difference of sex development, cause individuals with no Y chromosome to develop as boys. Many individuals do not know that they have these conditions unless they experience health concerns or infertility later in life. Defining sex based on sex chromosomes, the presence of certain internal organs, and hormone levels necessitates testing of these in all children, and it is worrisome to have the government involved in such testing.

In closing, I believe this bill needlessly limits and confuses the definitions of male and female. It will only serve to exclude the lived experiences of transgender individuals, intersex individuals, and individuals with disorders of sexual development from data collection, which will hinder the ability of the government to properly serve these people. **I urge this committee to return an unfavorable report on HB1474.**