

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2104

November 2, 2018

Honorable Alex M. Azar II
Secretary of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20301-0004

Dear Secretary Azar,

We write to you to express our strong objection to reported efforts within your department to eliminate the rights and protections of transgender Americans. The proposal to redefine the definition of “sex” under Title IX to specifically exclude transgender people is a brazen and targeted attack on the lives of 2 million Americans, effectively abandoning their right to equal access to health care, housing, education, and fair treatment under the law. Adoption of this cruel and unscientific definition of sex would undermine enforcement of civil rights for millions, and we implore you to stop any attempt by extremists within the Department of Health and Human Services to infringe upon the dignity, rights, and lives of transgender people.

Research conclusively shows transgender people tragically face disproportionately high rates of discrimination in every aspect of life. The U.S. Transgender Survey shows that that 26 percent of transgender people have lost a job due to bias, 50 percent have been harassed at work, 20 percent have been evicted or denied housing, 78 percent of transgender students have faced harassment or assault, and 33 percent of those who have seen a health care provider faced harassment or were refused treatment.

This proposal intends to erase transgender people from federal civil rights protections and eviscerate enforcement of non-discrimination laws. Re-defining ‘sex’ in this narrow language disregards Supreme Court and circuit court case law precedent and could only be part of a deliberate strategy to eliminate federal protections for transgender people and further marginalize an at-risk minority group. Furthermore, this proposal goes against federal court precedent and counters the consensus of medical providers and scientists across the globe who have found no reliable evidence to support such a definition and therefore urge governments and society to accept transgender people for who they are. This proposal raises countless practical, legal, and medical questions and implications that the Department apparently has not considered, including but not limited to medical privacy concerns, discrimination against intersex Americans, and consideration for women and girls who are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes.

Under this proposal, it is possible for a transgender person to be denied access to medical care or health insurance or be refused access to emergency shelter or public housing, and transgender children could be denied access to public education. This leaked proposal makes it clear

members of this administration are willing to disregard the established medical and legal view of transgender rights and lives to solidify an archaic, dogmatic, and alarming view of the world. We strongly urge you to stand up to these extremists and prevent this dangerous proposal from ever becoming Department or administration policy.

This proposal is an unequivocal attack on the dignity and lives of American citizens. We demand a complete rejection of this shameless attempt to eliminate the rights of transgender people.

Sincerely,



JOSEPH P. KENNEDY, III
Member of Congress



MARK DESAULNIER
Member of Congress



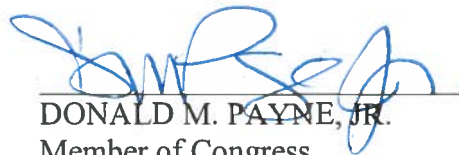
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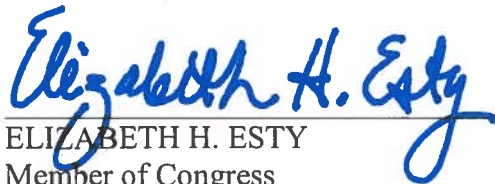
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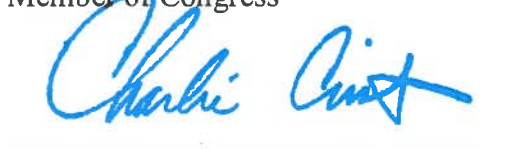
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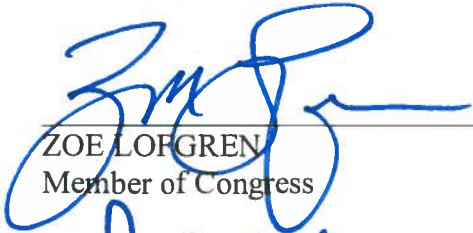
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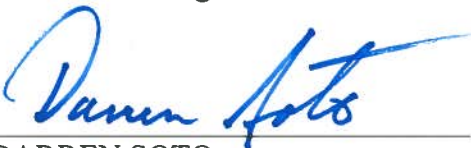
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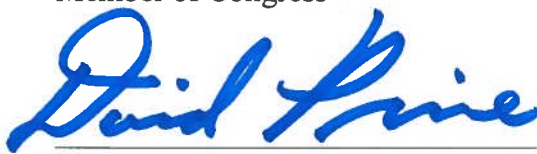

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