

Texas Joins Ban on Surgical Mutilation for Transgender Minors

The list of states that are banning gender-affirming care for minors is growing, much to the delight of conservatives and concerned parents around the nation.

Texas became the latest state to prohibit doctors from performing mastectomies or surgeries that would sterilize a minor or remove otherwise healthy tissue or body parts. The new law, signed by Gov. Greg Abbott last week, also prohibits doctors from prescribing drugs that would induce transient or permanent infertility.

The measure is set to go into effect on Sept. 1, and makes Texas the largest state to ban transition medical procedures for people under 18.

And why does that matter? Texas has one of the largest transgender populations in the country.

The Williams Institute, a research center that reports on the demographics of LGBTQ people, says that nearly 30,000 transgender people ages 13 to 17 live in Texas.

Senate Bill 14 has drawn major protests from transgender Texans and their supporters. The measure was passed by the state legislature last month, and opponents condemned the bill as a “politicized assault” on transgender people.

Supporters of the legislation have referred to these treatments on minors as “mutilation.”

Arkansas became the first state to outlaw transition-related medical treatments for minors in April 2021.

Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Utah and West Virginia have allowed followed suit. Some states, such as Arizona and Alabama, passed bans prior to this year, but Alabama's law has since been blocked by a federal judge as it faces a challenge in court.

Dozens of bills are still being considered by lawmakers in other states. Officials in Florida and Missouri have bypassed state legislatures. Missouri's ban came from the state attorney general in April through an emergency regulation that limited gender-affirming care for both minors and adults.

Last month in Florida, Gov. Ron DeSantis signed a law banning these surgeries on minors after it was passed by the state legislature. In addition, this law also grants Florida courts "temporary emergency jurisdiction" over a child if they have been subjected to or "threatened" with sex-reassignment prescriptions or procedures, according to US News and World Report.

Emmett Schelling, executive director of the Transgender Education Network of Texas, told the Texas Tribune that "It's not shocking the governor would sign SB14 right at the beginning of Pride [Month]; however, this will not stop trans people from continuing to exist with authenticity—as we always have."

But that doesn't mean there wouldn't be consequences if this law is violated. Media reports say that medical providers who are convicted of violating this law could have their license revoked. {eo}

Shawn A. Akers *is the online editor at Charisma Media.*