

Transanity Wars' New Target: Society's Most Vulnerable

Transgender advocates in the California Legislature have introduced legislation that would require elderly residents in skilled nursing facilities to share rooms and bathrooms with biologically opposite individuals.

SB 219, sponsored by Senator Wiener, would allow a transgender individual to occupy a room and use restroom facilities based on gender identity as opposed to biological reality.

It is difficult if not impossible for elderly residents in care facilities to maintain bodily privacy in shared rooms. SB 219 proposes that a transgender individual could demand to be placed in a room with a biologically opposite person, or could alternatively request to be placed in a room with somebody of the same biological sex.

"This legislation strips privacy rights from vulnerable, elderly individuals while giving new rights to transgender individuals," said privacy advocate Karen England. "The proposed legislation specifically prohibits a non-transgender resident from objecting to a transgender person becoming their roommate, but allows the transgender person to select whether to room with a male or a female."

In 2013, California passed the first in the country transgender law that would allow kindergarten through 12th grade public school students to choose their bathroom, shower or locker room based on gender identity. As with this newly proposed legislation for the elderly, the 2013 legislation gave special rights to transgender individuals to use whichever facility they felt most comfortable in without concern for exposure to or from others.

"No female should have to expose herself to or view the

exposure of a biological male against her will,” said England. “This is the case whether the female is a 14-year-old in a junior high locker room or a grandmother in an elderly care facility.”

Privacy advocates are pointing to the fact that the proposed legislation regarding the elderly and the previous legislation applying to students as young as kindergarten age, seem to target the most vulnerable of California residents.

“Those who are trying to eliminate sex separated facilities did not start with the bathrooms used by the governor or members of the Legislature,” said England. “They started with facilities used by little kids and the elderly. We should not tolerate such bullying.” {eoa}