

Report from the House General Laws Committee – January 24, 2023

Tuesday evening the **House General Laws Committee** heard several bills relating to LGBTQ+ care in a marathon hearing lasting until 2am (you read that right). Broadly speaking, the Chairman divided the bills into categories affecting athletic competition participation, access to gender affirming care, and public cabaret or drag performances, which I have detailed below.

- **Athletic Competition Participation** HB170, sponsored by Rep. **Brian Seitz** (R-Taney Co.); HB183, sponsored by Rep. **Jamie Burger** (R-Scott Co.); and HB337, sponsored by Rep. **Bennie Cook** (R-Texas Co.) establish guidelines which restrict participation in student athletic competitions for grades K-12 based on birth gender, as listed on a state-issued birth certificate. The bills also add definitions of gender/sex based on biological definitions and restrict the time period during which gender/sex can be changed on a birth certificate. More than 45 individuals testified in opposition to the proposals, while only 10 testified in support, including Secretary of State **Jay Ashcroft**.
- **Access to Gender Affirming Care** HB419, sponsored by Rep. **Brad Hudson** (R-Stone Co.); HB463, sponsored by Rep. **Mazzie Boyd** (R-Caldwell Co.); and HB540, sponsored by Rep. **Justin Sparks** (R-St. Louis Co) each restrict parents and providers from providing access to gender affirming care, including hormone replacement and mental health treatment, in addition to surgical procedures, for individuals below the age of 18. The bills include penalty provisions criminalizing non-adherence to the law and would severely restrict access to gender affirming care. Opposition testimony was provided by the **Missouri Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics** and the **Missouri College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists**, in addition to 15 individuals testifying in person against the proposals. Four individuals testified in support of the bills, and more than 300 individuals submitted opposing testimony online.
- **Cabaret & Drag Performance Restrictions** HB494, sponsored by Rep. **Ben Baker** (R-Newton Co.) and HB498, sponsored by Rep. **Mazzie Boyd** (R-Caldwell Co.), are bills which define "sexually oriented business" as bars, nightclubs, restaurants, and other commercial businesses featuring dancing performances or displays of individuals appearing as a gender other than that of their birth. The bills go on to classify these performances as a class A misdemeanor for the first offense and class E felony for subsequent offenses if the performance occurs on public property or where minors could potentially view it. Several adult performers, business owners, and LGBTQ+ activists testified in opposition to the bills and only 1 individual testified in support.

[Coverage by the Missouri Independent](#)