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Attorney General Steve Marshall Leads Appellate Court Brief Defending Arkansas Ban on Experimental Transgender Treatments for Children

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Steve Marshall filed an amicus brief in a federal appellate court defending an Arkansas law protecting children from devastating and irreversible experimental transgender treatments. The Alabama-led, 19-state brief was filed Friday in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

In April, the State of Arkansas enacted the “Save Adolescents from Experimentation (SAFE) Act” to prohibit gender transition procedures for minors, including the use of puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and surgery. In July, Alabama led a coalition of 17 states to defend the Arkansas law, which, after being enjoined by a federal district court order, has been appealed to the Eighth Circuit.

“Alabama and our coalition of states are alarmed by the growing number of children suffering from gender dysphoria and other forms of gender-related psychological distress,” said Attorney General Marshall. “We all agree that these vulnerable children need help. The question is how to address their needs without causing serious long-term damage.

“The district wrongly relied on a brief filed by the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics to conclude that the ‘consensus’ of the medical community requires ‘treating’ children with puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and surgical interventions. These groups have drifted far from their roots as respected medical organizations. The AMA now regularly lobbies for abortion, and recently released a dystopian language guide with a list of now-forbidden words (e.g., ‘disadvantaged’ and ‘under-served’) and their approved replacements (‘historically and intentionally excluded’). And both groups stifle debate within their own ranks, declare any questioning of the political zeitgeist as ‘animus’ (or worse), and proclaim a false consensus of medical professionals that simply does not exist.

“If anyone spent just a little bit of time with the scientific literature in this area, they would quickly learn that science is largely unsettled; nearly everyone agrees that far more research is needed; and the currently popular approach to care in the United States is not supported by well-researched evidence-based studies. What is known, however, is that most cases of gender dysphoria in children resolve naturally with time, and it’s impossible to know ahead of time whose dysphoria will persist into adulthood and whose won’t. Yet the evidence also shows that nearly all children whose gender dysphoria is treated with puberty blockers to ‘buy time’ will proceed to take cross-sex hormones and seek medical interventions with irreversible, life-long consequences such as infertility, loss of sexual function, increased risk of heart attack and stroke, bone density problems, risk of brain development, social harms from delayed puberty, and mental health concerns.”



“Rather than resort to risky and potentially devastating experimentation on vulnerable children, the Arkansas Legislature chose a path that has served the medical profession well for so long: First, do no harm.”

Attorney General Marshall was joined in the brief by the attorneys general of Alaska, Arizona, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and West Virginia.

The Attorneys General brief can be read [here](#).