

This letter, signed by 644, was sent to the governor's office on March 2, 2022.

Given the public nature of this letter, these [resources](#) may be useful to those seeking more information about gender affirming care for teaching, working with, and parenting TGNC children and youth.

To donate to the ACLU of Texas, a transgender affirming organization, please click [here](#)

February 25, 2022

To Texas Governor Greg Abbott:

As social work scholars, practitioners, and allied health and mental health professionals, we strongly oppose your letter dated February 22, 2022, implementing the OAG's Opinion No. KP-0401, which defines gender affirming care as child abuse and requires licensed child-serving professionals to report youth who have had gender affirming medical care to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. This policy is not only cruel, but directly contradicts the standards of care set forth by the [American Medical Association](#), the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), the [American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry](#), and the [American Psychological Association](#), and is in opposition to the position of the [National Association of Social Workers - Texas](#).

Transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) children and youth face discrimination, rejection, and hostility in a society that reinforces binary gender norms. As social welfare scholars and practitioners, we are particularly concerned about the impact of the Texas legislation on TGNC youth of color and their caregivers because of the ways that child welfare systems have been used to police and rupture these families. Due to systemic racism, TGNC children and youth of color face even greater risks of societal marginalization, making family/caregiver support particularly critical for their survival. We support parents/caregivers who are taking steps to nurture and support their TGNC children's gender identity and health, and protect them from a hostile political and social climate. The prohibitory policies and laws outlined in your letter are part of a larger culture that ultimately places TGNC children and youth and their families at greater risk of isolation, social marginalization, and violence.

Over the last few decades, trans communities in partnership with healthcare providers and researchers have made [incredible strides](#) in demonstrating that family support, gender affirming health and mental health care, and supportive institutions, laws and policies saves lives and are key to the well-being and safety of TGNC children and youth. Standards of care for TGNC children and youth are well established and help TGNC children and youth to thrive. The notion that parents or caregivers who are acting in support of their TGNC child or youth could be reported for "child abuse" is egregious and dangerous. In fact, research repeatedly

demonstrates that TGNC children and youth have significantly better mental health outcomes when they are supported by their parents and caregivers.

The position you have set forth not only contradicts widely used standards of care, but also undermines social workers' ethical responsibilities to uphold the dignity and worth of all human beings. Asking social workers and other licensed providers to police TGNC children and families creates extreme, unnecessary, and unsafe barriers to accessing a wide range of social, health, and community services. Social workers cannot implement these policies without violating their core professional values and responsibilities, and as such, we will stand by social workers in their resistance and families in their persistence to support their TGNC children's gender affirmation. In fact, we view such policies as child abuse and recognize them as state sanctioned violence. We are committed to a united and vocal resistance and will continue to fight tirelessly for dignity and human rights of TGNC children, youth, and families.

We insist that you immediately rescind your letter to the Director of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and denounce Opinion KP-0401.

Signed,

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[Full List of 645 Signers Available Here](#)