



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS County of Dane

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Dane County Board Chair Patrick Miles and Supervisors Yang, Wegleitner, Bare, Chawla, Doyle, Gray, Collins, Doolan, Hynes, Glazer, Kigeys, Pellebon, Castillo, Palm, Engelberger, Wright, Andrae, Erickson, Hatcher, Eicher, and Hulsemann, released the following statement on SSM Health discontinuing gender-affirming care:

The decision from SSM Health to discontinue care that is medically necessary is dangerous to members of the community who continue to face threats and intimidation. Health care institutions need to be held accountable to do what is right, and not limit access to care, but expand it. SSM Health's ill-conceived policymaking limiting the holistic approach of gender-affirming care will contribute to further discrimination of transgender and nonbinary people as well as threaten their health and well-being. Religion should not override scientific, evidence-based medical care. The County Board Chair has requested Corporation Counsel to provide an opinion on whether there are any contract violations as a result of the SSM Health policy change and for what action the County can and should take if there are violations.

The County Board recently approved a resolution declaring Dane County to be a sanctuary for trans and nonbinary individuals, affirming the Board's commitment to protect transgender and nonbinary individuals. Access to health care is a fundamental right, and health care includes gender-affirming care. The decision by SSM Health to eliminate needed care is antithetical to Dane County's values. In the face of increasingly harmful decisions and rhetoric, Dane County will work with vendors and partners that support these values. To that end, we request that the Insurance Advisory Committee and County Administration include gender-affirming care as a priority in negotiating future healthcare plans.