

## MJ Stallard, Opposition Testimony on HB2238

As a teacher in a KC metro area private middle school, I have had a handful of students begin the process of transitioning to the gender with which they connected. This process has always been handled with great care by the families and the school. There is much conversation shared with faculty regarding the families stance as well as the child's doctor's notes. The process is just that, it is long and thoughtful. In all instances I have watched that student come into their own, in each case I felt it was a positive situation and I felt comfortable that the families were doing everything in their power to get the help medically and emotionally that their struggling child needed.

In 2020, my brother came to our family to tell us that his oldest, my wonderful nephew, had begun to transition over the pandemic. It was interesting to me, how open I was to this as a teacher with my students, but when it was my FAMILY, my heart dropped. I wasn't phased because I didn't think it was the right thing to do, or that they had made a drastic decision. My heart dropped because I knew what these people that I care so deeply for would have to face.

Let me tell you a little bit about my brother's family. My brother and sister in law are college graduates and high achievers in their individual occupational fields. They spend their free time volunteering in the community and with their children's activities. They have raised two of the SMARTEST, kindest young people that I know. I have watched my niece change from a quiet, reserved child to a college student who is being tapped to be on various university committees, engaged in social activities and excelling at new hobbies she loves. Looking back, I see the discomfort that was felt as a boy, weight gain, isolation, and discomfort. Now I see my niece as quite simply, a lovely person who has so much good to offer.

I tell you about my family because it is important to know that everything they have done for their daughter would have followed their trusted doctor's suggestions. The fact that people in government are able to flat out LIE about this process with children is terrible. At the most basic level, they are wasting our time and money to create laws that doctors are already following globally via a common set of guidelines agreed upon by MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS. These guidelines have existed and over time have only become better suited to children and their psychological and medical needs. I find it more than troubling that these people in congress somehow think they know better than highly trained doctors. I wonder if they had a family member come down with a serious illness and a law in Kansas somehow stopped them from seeking medical advice if they would feel good about that? Likely not, though this is what they are doing to these families that are only doing their best to support their children.

I know if you compared the numbers of the children this affects to the number of children you could help by talking about hunger, mental health, homelessness, education, your time and energy is much better spent in these areas. Quite frankly, what you are doing is bullying for the sake of your base and I will remind you, the people of Kansas are good, moderate people who care about their community. I believe pursuing this bill would be a huge mistake.