



The Kid Angle

Kid-focused news from First Focus on Children

Transgender health care bill threatens ALL children

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House lawmakers are considering several bills on children's health care today. Among them —surprise, surprise — is **a bill to deny educational dollars to children's hospitals that provide person-affirming care to transgender children.**

There are oh-so-many reasons that this is a bad idea (but we'll give you just a few).

The Health Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee is at this very moment marking up a half-dozen bills, including bills aimed at supporting the research, treatment and prevention of premature birth and heritable blood diseases such as sickle cell, improving maternal health care, and promoting the medical education of pediatricians and pediatric specialists.

Lurking in the pile, however, is a bill dedicated to decimating the training and recruitment of children's doctors, a breed already in short supply.

In his reauthorization of the Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education program ([H.R. 3887](#)), Rep. Dan Crenshaw (R-TX) would ban payments to children's hospitals that provide gender-affirming care to minors.

The education programs at children's hospitals — which number just 59 in the country — [train half of all the nation's pediatricians and more than half of all its pediatric specialists](#). And they already work at a disadvantage: As [First Focus Campaign for Children noted in a letter to the committee](#), funding for graduate medical education at children's hospitals accounts for [less than 3 percent of all federal spending on graduate medical programs](#), and — unlike graduate medical education for geriatric doctors — this funding is not mandatory.

The nation's freestanding children's hospitals are the **only hospitals in the country that:**

- **must repeatedly seek reauthorization** for their medical education funding
- endure annual appropriations fights that deliver just **half the funding per resident** that Medicare-reimbursed programs receive
- suffer **funding delays** created by the Congressional budgeting process

Here are four reasons H.R. 3887 is a disaster for ALL children, not just trans gender children:

1. Children's hospitals provide the **vast majority of all treatment for pediatric cancer**, which remains a leading cause of death for America's children.
2. **Pediatric mortality is on the rise**, fueled by gun violence and our children's mental health crisis.
3. **More than a quarter of all U.S. children have delayed or missed preventive care** due to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to [a report this week in JAMA Network](#). The instance of delays is slightly higher among Black and Hispanic children. If the trend continues we will see more – not less – chronic illness and preventable disease in children.
4. Medicaid unwinding [threatens the health care of 7 million children](#), increasing the chances that children with chronic diseases will go untreated.

All of the above make this an especially cruel time to threaten the education of pediatricians.

Track the progress of these bills on the [First Focus Campaign for Children bill tracker](#).



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