

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 19, 2022

Jessica Stern
U.S. Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI+) Persons
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Jessica Stern,

We are writing to you out of grave concern with a recently leaked¹ memo from the Department of State detailing its plans to coerce other countries to normalize and encourage transgenderism among youth, attendant to E.O. 14075 directing federal agencies to ban so-called “conversion therapy.”

First and foremost, normalizing and encouraging transgenderism among children has no place in American society, especially when it is done by the federal government. Children in America and abroad shouldn’t be exploited to advance a radical agenda.

The State Department’s memo defines conversion therapy as any effort to “suppress or change an individual’s...gender identity.” This definition implies that counselling minors against gender transition is akin to electrically shocking minors to “cure” same-sex attraction. It also condemns all potential treatments for youth suffering from gender dysphoria aside from the two most extreme and irreversible options: transition surgery and hormone therapy. This ignores the fact there is no strong empirical evidence to support the idea that gender transition surgery helps patients lead happier, better, healthier, or more fulfilled lives.² However, there are many reports of transgender individuals feeling physiologically damaged post-transition.³

The State Department’s memo is a form of radical gender imperialism that threatens our relationships with other nations and harms our standing in the world. The memo directs U.S. embassies to “submit robust information on ‘conversion therapy’ practices” of host countries “as part of the annual Human Rights Reports.” The office of the Special Envoy to Advance the

¹ <https://www.city-journal.org/state-dept-launches-international-gender-pressure-campaign>

² https://segm.org/unknown_gender_transition_regret_rate_adolescents

³ <https://www.hli.org/resources/what-percentage-of-transgenders-regret-surgery/>

Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons is then tasked to devise an “action plan to combat the practice across foreign policy and foreign assistance lines of effort.”

The first consequence of this policy is to undermine our allies’ regard for the United States’ moral authority on human rights issues.

Many countries in Europe, including the United Kingdom, Finland, and Sweden, employ either ‘last line of defense’ policies on “gender affirming care,” or have banned gender surgeries for youth altogether.⁴ These more restrictive policies now risk making Western European nations “human rights abusers” in the eyes of the State Department, putting them on similar footing as the People Republic of China (PRC), which has committed genocide of the Uyghurs or the Maduro regime, which has utilized arbitrary detentions and torture against regime dissidents in Venezuela.

The initiative also threatens the relationships the United States enjoys with countries in which, unlike parts of America and Western Europe, transgenderism does not enjoy government support. In Africa, the Middle East and much of the developing world, for example, where the U.S. enjoys key strategic relationships, this initiative could prove disastrous.

Finally, the initiative will intensify the distrust towards the United States in countries skeptical of U.S. influence. This initiative will give anti-American leaders ammunition to further propagate anti-American sentiment and policies.

As members of the Republican Study Committee, we are committed to providing oversight of this radical proposal. **Please provide a copy of the aforementioned memo no later than October 7, and preserve all other documents⁵ relevant to the initiative to promote transgenderism among global youth.** Given your use of the State Department to promote radical, divisive, and destructive cultural policies, we also request that you answer the following questions no later than October 7:

1. What is the exact purpose of this initiative?
2. How does this initiative strengthen relations with foreign countries, especially those in Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere in the developing world?
3. How does the initiative incentivize certain strategically important countries to side with the U.S. sphere against China and Russia, like those mentioned in question two?
4. How does the State Department countenance this initiative and its professed commitment to religious liberty?
5. Why should Americans support an initiative abroad that is so culturally divisive in America?⁶
6. Who in the Biden administration approved of this initiative?
7. Was this initiative solely the product of State Department officials? Or did any outside Non-Government Organizations provide a guiding hand?
8. Did the Department of Health and Human Services help draft the memo?

⁴ <https://genderreport.ca/the-swedish-u-turn-on-gender-transitioning/>

⁵ INSERT STANDARD LANGUAGE RE DOCUMENT PRESERVATION - “Document is defined as...”

⁶ <https://news.gallup.com/poll/350174/mixed-views-among-americans-transgender-issues.aspx>

9. If any NGOs were involved, which ones?
10. Does the State Department intend to use financial pressure to push public health regulators in Sweden, Finland, the U.K. towards endorsing “gender affirming care?”
11. How will the Biden administration punish countries that allow nonsurgical and non-hormonal treatment of youth gender dysphoria?
12. By what metric(s) will the State Department deem the Stern initiative successful?
13. Will economic and cultural cooperation between the U.S. and other nations be made contingent on these countries demonstrating that a sufficient number of youth every year have “transitioned”?

We request that you provide to us a briefing in person on this initiative. Furthermore, and as mentioned above, we request that you preserve all documents and communications related to the establishment of this initiative. We request this briefing and these documents no later than 5:00 PM on Friday, September 30.

Thank you very much for your attention on this matter and we are looking forward to hearing your responses to these questions.

Sincerely,



Jim Banks
Member of Congress



Brian Babin
Member of Congress



Glenn Grothman
Member of Congress



W. Gregory Steube
Member of Congress



Randy Weber
Member of Congress



Dan Bishop
Member of Congress



Lance Gooden
Member of Congress



Jody Hice
Member of Congress



Ralph Norman
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Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress



Robert B. Aderholt
Member of Congress