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Attorney General Brown Joins Coalition in Opposing Oklahoma's Ban on Lifesaving Gender-Affirming Care

BALTIMORE, MD (November 17, 2023) – Maryland Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today joined a multistate coalition in opposing a state law in Oklahoma that blocks transgender youth from accessing critical, lifesaving gender-affirming care.

The plaintiffs in *Poe v. Drummond* are suing to block Oklahoma's Senate Bill (SB) 613, which restricts medical treatment for transgender minors seeking gender-affirming care. After the district court denied a motion for a preliminary injunction against SB 613, plaintiffs appealed to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals. Today, the coalition filed an [amicus brief](#) in support of the plaintiffs, arguing that Oklahoma's ban on gender-affirming care violates equal protection and stressing the importance of gender-affirming care for the health and well-being of transgender youth.

“Everyone has a fundamental right to receive quality healthcare, and transgender youth are no exception,” **said Attorney General Brown**. “I stand firmly alongside my colleagues across several states in denouncing this harmful legislation that violates equal protection for all.”

Many transgender teens suffer from gender dysphoria, which results from the incongruence between their gender identity and sex assigned at birth. Gender dysphoria has been found to cause severe distress and anxiety, depression, fatigue, decreased social functioning, substance misuse, and a poorer quality of life. Among transgender people, suicide attempts are nine times more common than in the overall U.S. population. Those risks are even higher among transgender youth.

Oklahoma's SB 613 seeks to block transgender youth's access to medical treatment, such as hormone therapy and puberty blockers, that help to treat gender dysphoria.

In today's brief, the coalition supported the plaintiffs' lawsuit seeking to block the enforcement of SB 613, arguing that the law:

- Significantly harms the health and lives of transgender people by denying them medically necessary care that protects their physical, emotional, and psychological health;

- Is discriminatory and violates the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution by banning medical treatment for transgender youth based on their gender identity;
- Fails to recognize how inclusive laws and policies have benefited transgender individuals; and
- Does not satisfy heightened scrutiny because a complete ban on medically necessary healthcare is not substantially related to Oklahoma's asserted interests.

In filing the brief, Attorney General Brown joins the Attorneys General of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington.

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2023/111723.pdf>