

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR
THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

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DYLAN BRANDT, et al.,	:
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Plaintiffs,	: Case No.: 4:21-CV-00450-JM-01
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v.	:
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LESLIE RUTLEDGE, et al.,	:
	:
Defendants.	:
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**DECLARATION OF DONNIE SAXTON
IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' MOTION FOR A PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION**

I, Donnie Saxton, hereby declare as follows:

1. I am a Plaintiff in this action. I offer this Declaration in support of Plaintiffs' Motion for a Preliminary Injunction. I have personal knowledge of the facts set forth in this Declaration and could and would testify competently to those facts if called as a witness.
2. I am the father of Parker Saxton, a 16-year-old sophomore in high school. Parker is transgender. When he was born, he was designated as female on his birth certificate but his gender identity is male.
3. Parker came out to me as transgender in a letter when he was around 13 years old. He asked that I refer to him by male pronouns and to call him by a male version of his birth name. Later, he asked me to call him Parker.
4. I was not surprised when Parker sent me that letter. Since he was in pre-school Parker would tell me that he did not want to be a girl, and for as long as I can remember I have observed Parker experience horrible anxiety about having to use public restrooms and he



avoided using them. When he was 11 years old, Parker cut his hair short and, starting in the seventh grade, dressed exclusively in boys' clothes.

5. I have not always understood what it means to be transgender, and I did not always support transgender rights. But as I watched Parker suffer, I learned more and am trying to understand what he is going through. With Parker, I started to understand that he experiences distress every time he looks in the mirror. He just wants to look in the mirror and see the person that he is on the inside staring back at him so that he can go about his day. I wish I could say that my child has spent his entire life being comfortable in his skin, but that is just not true for Parker.

6. Though it took me some time to get used to using male pronouns with Parker, now they flow easily for me. I am proud and supportive of my son and call him "my little dude". I just want to help him be able to see himself the way he feels on the inside.

7. After Parker came out as transgender, I observed him take further steps to live as a boy. He started introducing himself with a male name and asked that he be referred to by male pronouns. At formal choir performances, Parker has been wearing a tuxedo.

8. Though I have observed, and Parker has told me, that taking steps to live as the young man he is has helped him feel more like himself, I have also observed him continue to struggle with his body not matching his gender identity. Parker told me that he began wearing four or five sports bras at a time in an effort to change the physical appearance of his body; he also told me that he feels uncomfortable getting out of the shower and viewing himself in a mirror. I have observed that he refuses to participate in activities that would require him to wear a bathing suit.

9. Parker asked me to take him to receive medical care to help change his physical appearance to match his male gender. In 2019, I took him to the Gender Spectrum Clinic

at Arkansas Children's Hospital. There, Parker was diagnosed with gender dysphoria. The first step Parker's doctors recommended was that he be treated with Depo-Provera to stop menstruation because that caused him significant distress. Parker has been getting that treatment since the fall of 2019.

10. Parker's mental health greatly improved after he started receiving healthcare to treat his gender dysphoria. As a result, he was able to stop taking the Zoloft that he had been taking to manage his anxiety and depression.

11. Because Parker responded so well to receiving this treatment but was still struggling from gender dysphoria, and his gender identity has been consistent for so long, we decided, together with his doctors, that he should begin taking testosterone.

12. Parker began receiving testosterone injections on May 27, 2021. Since that time, I think Parker has been the most himself and in the best mood since he was seven years old. We have waited a long time for this.

13. After watching him make great strides under the care of his doctors and from his treatment for gender dysphoria, it was devastating to observe Parker's anxiety worsen when he learned about the General Assembly's effort to pass the Health Care Ban. As a result of the new law he had to resume taking medication for anxiety. I started sleeping on the couch close to Parker's bedroom because I realized Parker's sleep has been disturbed—I wanted to ensure I am available to provide emotional support if he needs it no matter what time it is.

14. I worry about the potential physical and mental health consequences of Parker beginning testosterone and then having to stop, but I have realized that not taking testosterone is not an option for Parker. If the Health Care Ban goes into effect, we will explore leaving the state so he can continue to receive treatment.

15. Moving out-of-state would be very difficult for us, but we will do it if necessary to ensure Parker can continue his treatment. I have lived in Arkansas my entire life, and have raised my family here. I own a plumbing business here, and moving would jeopardize our family's financial stability. It would also separate us from my parents, with whom we have a close, supportive relationship, and other relatives.

16. Conway, Arkansas is our home. We are part of the community, and I know Parker is safe surrounded by the community that has known him his entire life. I worry that if we move, we will not find the same support and connection elsewhere. I should not have to make the choice between getting healthcare for my son and keeping my family in their home.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed in Conway, Arkansas on this 12th day of June, 2021.


Donnie Saxton