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Federal judge blocks Trump's attempt to end gender-affirming care for minors

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A federal judge has blocked President Donald Trump's attempt to end gender-affirming care for minors, according to Connecticut Attorney General William Tong.

The order, handed down on March 21, ruled that the Trump administration "cannot threaten to cut off hospitals and clinics from Medicare and Medicaid for providing gender-affirming care," according to a press release from Tong's office.

"Trump and [Robert F. Kennedy Jr.] tried to deny care and force a radical political agenda on doctors and families by weaponizing Medicare and Medicaid funding," Tong said in the press release. "This was cruel and illegal, and we just beat them in court. We're going to keep fighting and winning to protect the right of families and doctors to make personal medical decisions free from political interference."

The Trump administration's push to end gender-affirming care for youth started with an executive order issued a week after Trump was inaugurated for his second term. The order, titled "Protecting Children From Chemical And Surgical Mutilation," called this type of health care "a stain on our Nation's history."

"It is the policy of the United States that it will not fund, sponsor, promote, assist or support the so-called 'transition' of a child from one sex to another, and it will rigorously enforce all laws that prohibit or limit these destructive and life-altering procedures," the executive order read.

The order sought to defund "chemical and surgical mutilation" — puberty blockers, sex hormones and surgeries to remove or alter one's sexual organs — by ensuring that medical institutions receiving federal research or education grants were not performing gender-affirming care. It also prompted the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to alter Medicare or Medicaid conditions for coverage of these procedures and mandatory drug use reviews, among other things.



A trans flag blowing in the wind on flag pole. PHOTO BY PINTEREST @TRANSAMSTERDAM

In December, the HHS announced several regulation proposals to carry out Trump's executive order. The proposals instructed the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to release its own proposed rules barring hospitals from performing gender-affirming care on those under 18 years old as a condition of participation in Medicare and Medicaid, which nearly all U.S. hospitals participate in. The proposals also prohibited federal Medicaid funding to be used for these procedures.

A December HHS report said that gender-affirming care does not meet "professionally recognized standards of health care." HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy then signed a declaration saying that "practitioners who perform sex-rejecting procedures on minors would be deemed out of compliance with those standards."

The court's order specifically ruled that Kennedy's declaration barring Medicaid and Medicare funding for gender-affirming care was an overstep of his authority.

The other attorneys general cooperating with Connecticut and D.C. in the coalition are California, Colorado, Delaware, Hawai'i, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington and Wisconsin, along with the governor of Pennsylvania.

New Connecticut bill encourages accountability for ICE agents



The Connecticut state capitol building sits at sunset. A bill that would protect and educate citizens about ICE agents and also hold them more accountable is now advancing to the CT senate to be voted on. PHOTO BY @TRAVEL2NEXT ON PINTEREST.

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On March 23, the Connecticut legislature's Judiciary Committee voted on Senate Bill No. 397, a bill whose primary purpose is "to enact statutory provisions providing for the accountable administration and enforcement of law in the state."

The bill focuses on three key areas: expanding and protecting the rights of citizens when interacting with federal agents, enhancing accountability for law enforcement agents and keeping the public informed about immigration enforcement activities in Connecticut.

This bill was proposed following the deaths of Alex Pretti and Renee Good at the hands of ICE agents in Minnesota.

The bill protects and expands the rights of citizens to sue state and federal officials for constitutional violations, with damages and legal fees available.

While this right was federally protected by the Supreme Court in the 1971 case Bivens vs. Six Unknown Named Agents of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, the Court has not allowed such a lawsuit to proceed in over 30 years.

Additionally, the bill strengthens police accountability through stricter use-of-force rules, mandatory investigations and public reporting of incidents.

It requires officers to be identifiable, restricting the use of masks in most cases, and limits legal immunity should they violate these rules. It also restricts arrests for civil offenses in sensitive locations, including schools, hospitals and places of worship without a warrant. These restrictions also include allowing the state to sue the supervisors of any officer who attempts to stop someone from recording or photographing them.

Finally, the bill establishes a public dashboard that tracks immigration enforcement activity and interactions between local agencies and federal authorities, allowing citizens to remain aware and informed.

Other states have already enacted similar legislation, including California, Massachusetts, Maine and Illinois.

In a press conference on Monday, Connecticut State Attorney General William Tong and Sen. Richard Blumenthal promoted the bill.

"I want to be clear to everybody in this state, in this building, across Connecticut, that it is the policy and the law of the state of Connecticut to respect, honor and protect immigrants and immigrant families, period," said Tong.

Blumenthal made it clear that the law would not interfere with the Supremacy Clause of the Constitution, which states that federal law trumps state law when ruling on the same issue.

"What we have here is basically the state saying our citizens have rights against federal agents in court, and in no way does that in conflict with federal law," Blumenthal said.

The bill was advanced by the Judiciary Committee on Monday and is now waiting for approval from the Senate.

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