



December 4, 2017

The Honorable Mike Turzai, *Speaker*
The Honorable Dave Reed, *Majority Leader*
The Honorable Frank Dermody, *Minority Leader*
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
Harrisburg, PA 17120

RE: H.B.1933

Dear Members of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives:

On behalf of the Robert H. Ivy Pennsylvania Society of Plastic Surgeons (Ivy Society) and the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), we are writing to oppose H.B.1933. The Robert H. Ivy Pennsylvania Society of Plastic Surgeons is the largest association of plastic surgeons in Pennsylvania, and in conjunction with our national affiliate, we collectively represent 305 board-certified plastic surgeons in the state. Our mission is to advance quality care for plastic surgery patients, including those patients experiencing gender dysphoria, a condition in which a person has a disconnect between how they feel and their anatomic characteristics. H.B.1933 would prohibit coverage under Medical Assistance and CHIP for these treatments. The Ivy Society and ASPS oppose this bill.

As surgeons who provide care for transgender individuals, our members know firsthand what will happen should H.B.1933 become law. Gender-affirming surgeries will be unattainable for many transgender people who need them, depriving them of lasting concordance with their gendered self and enhanced psychological wellbeing and overall health. Care of individuals with gender dysphoria requires a multidisciplinary approach that may include mental health professionals, primary care physicians, endocrinologists and plastic surgeons. The breadth of the process demands comprehensive coverage from third party payers, and it is well within the scope of procedures that programs like Medical Assistance and CHIP should be ensuring access to. In fact, the multidisciplinary approach to gender confirmation allows for a program like CHIP to grant patients access to the counseling and hormonal therapy services that all underage gender confirmation candidates should complete prior to undergoing actual surgical reconstruction.

Please oppose H.B.1933 and work instead to advance a clean bill that preserves access to this important care for transgender community members in Pennsylvania. Please do not hesitate to contact Patrick Hermes, Director of Advocacy and Government Relations, at phermes@plasticsurgery.org or (847) 228-3331 with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey E. Janis, MD, FACS
President, American Society of Plastic Surgeons

Aron D. Wahrman, MD, MBA, MHCDS, FACS
President, Robert H. Ivy Pennsylvania Society of Plastic Surgeons