

## LEG Committee-House Judiciary testimony

**From:** leg-noreply@mt.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 10, 2021 6:57 AM  
**To:** LEG Applications Email Backup; LEG Committee-House Judiciary testimony  
**Subject:** Public Comment for Bill SB-215: Establish the religious freedom restoration act  
2021-03-11 08:00 AM - (H) Judiciary Successfully Submitted on 03-10-21 06:57  
**Attachments:** HCP Letter Against LGBTQ+ Bills.02.24.pdf

**Details:**

Bill: SB-215: Establish the religious freedom restoration act 2021-03-11 08:00 AM - (H) Judiciary

Position: Opponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: MT Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics

Name: Kathryn Lowe

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Phone: (406) 600-2033

City, State: Bozeman, MT

Written Statement: I'm a physician in MT. I urge you to vote no on SB 215 today. I am including a letter signed by over 150 healthcare providers throughout MT also urging you to vote no.

This bill would allow healthcare providers to deny necessary medical treatment. For example, a pharmacist could refuse to give a patient medicine to treat HIV, or refuse to give a patient their oral contraceptive pills. A counselor could refuse to see a child if that child happens to have two moms. A physician could refuse to treat a patient's abscess if they use IV drugs. Given our rural state, if healthcare providers refuse to provide their necessary services, many patients have nowhere else to go.

This bill would cause significant unintended harm to many Montanans.

Please vote no on SB 215 today.

Files: HCP Letter Against LGBTQ+ Bills.02.24.pdf Testify via Zoom: Yes Zoom Method: Computer

February 24, 2021

Dear Senators and Representatives of the Montana legislature,

We, the undersigned healthcare providers, are deeply concerned about a number of bills currently in the Montana legislature that are discriminatory towards our LGBTQ+ patients and fellow community members. It is our duty to support and care for all people, and to speak out when we witness harmful discrimination of any sort, especially discrimination against vulnerable minority populations.

Research unequivocally shows that stigmatized and marginalized populations, such as our fellow Montanans who are LGBTQ+, suffer an increased number of mental and physical health disparities compared to individuals who are not LGBTQ+. Increased rates of suicide, cancer, substance abuse, and obesity are just a few of the health disparities that LGBTQ+ individuals often face. These increased health disparities are not inherent in being LGBTQ+. These health disparities are the result of the stigma, prejudice, and discrimination as well as the denial of civil and human rights that LGBTQ+ individuals face in so many areas of their lives.

When legislatures pass harmful bills that discriminate against LGBTQ+ individuals, the suicide rate increases even more. For example, when HB 2, the infamous “bathroom bill” in North Carolina passed, the number of calls to a suicide hotline for transgender individuals doubled. The passage of that bill led to a number of lives lost from suicide. Alternatively, passage of bills that decrease discrimination, such as marriage equality, significantly decreases suicide rates among LGBTQ+ individuals.

A number of bills in the Montana legislature right now would further increase the discrimination that our LGBTQ+ Montanans already face. Allowing businesses and medical providers to discriminate against LGBTQ+ patients, prohibiting transgender youth from playing on sports teams, prohibiting gender diverse Montanans from aligning their birth certificate with their identity, and interfering with the physician-patient relationship would all only further increase the stigma, prejudice, and discrimination that our LGBTQ+ Montanans already face.

We, as Montana healthcare providers, are deeply troubled. We are troubled by the implications of each discriminatory bill. We are also gravely concerned by the sheer number of anti-LGBTQ+ bills currently being discussed in our legislature. Our fellow LGBTQ+ Montanans are already experiencing harm simply by knowing these discussions are happening. We strongly urge you to oppose all bills that would further discriminate against our fellow LGBTQ+ Montanans.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

1	Adam Arlnt	Kalispell	RMA
2	Adam Whiteley	Bozeman	Medical Student; Paramedic
3	Adrienne Bull	Dillon	PA
4	Alanna Sherstad-Ray	Bozeman	MSW
5	Alex Kurtz	Glendive	MD
6	Angelica Johnson	Fort Benton	APRN
7	Angie Ostrowski	Bozeman	MD- Pediatrician
8	Anita Azam	Billings	MD
9	Anne Thomas	Bozeman	MD
10	Annika Linkenbach	Billings	RN
11	Ashleigh Hursh	Butte	RMA
12	Ashley Shields	Dillon	RN
13	Betty Waren	Butte	RN
14	Brandy Colvin	Bozeman	RN, FNP
15	Brenna Cockburn	Billings	Medical Student
16	Brenna Ostertag	Missoula	Medical Student
17	Callie Riggan	Helena	MD
18	Carol Sisk	Bozeman	NP
19	Carolyn Bell	Belgrade	Medical Student
20	Carrie Gleason	Billings	RN
21	Casey Blumenthal	Helena	RN
22	Catherine Akin	Livingston	RN
23	Catherine Ebelke	Bozeman	PA-C
24	Catherine Woods	Bozeman	MD
25	Cathy Waterman Grace	Bozeman	MD
26	Cathy White	Butte	MD
27	Cecilia Heck	Bozeman	Medical Student
28	Chloe Georgeton	Bozeman	APRN
29	Christine Hodgson	Bozeman	NP
30	Christine Walsh	Butte	BSN, RN, Student AGPCNP
31	Christopher Blevins	Billings Clinic	MD
32	Cindee McKee	Clancy	LPN/Healthcare Coalition Director
33	Cody Swank	Bozeman	EMT-B
34	Colette Kirchhoff	Bozeman	MD, FAAFP
35	Colleen Wood	Billings	MD
36	Courtney Honken	Bozeman	Medical student
37	Daniela Mestre	Billings	MD
38	Danika Comey	Bozeman	MPH
39	David Higgins	Billings Clinic	MD
40	David King	Bozeman Health	MD
41	Deborah Agnew	Billings	MD
42	Deborah Cades	Bozeman	PA-C

43	Deborah R Liptzin	Missoula	MD
44	Emily Colomeda	Polson	RN
45	Eric Lowe	Bozeman	MD, FACEP, FAEMS
46	Erin Allen	Billings	MD
47	Erin Grantham	Billings	MD
48	Greta Hittner	Bozeman	CNA
49	Haleigh James	Billings	MD
50	Hannah Smith	Bozeman	PA-C
51	Hannah Wilson	Bozeman	LCPC
52	Harold Bruce	Butte	FNP
53	Heather Dinius	Butte	RMA
54	Heather Dziewit	Butte	MPH
55	Heather Marshall	Missoula	RN, CPN
56	Holly Hale	Bozeman	Medical Student
57	Jacob Meek	Bozeman	Medical Student
58	Jacqueline Wilson	Bozeman	MD
59	Jaime June	Bozeman	LC
60	Jalyn Huft	Ismay	MS
61	James Loeffelholz	Bozeman	MD
62	Jason Karro	Bozeman	MD
63	Jeff Scheihing	Bozeman	DO
64	Jennell Duey	Billings	MD
65	Jennifer Bennet	Bozeman	CMA
66	Jennifer Wilkinson	Missoula	MD
67	Jenny Runkel	Bozeman Health	APRN
68	Jerimiah Lysinger	Billings	MD
69	Jessica Cozzens	Billings	MD MPH
70	Joan Ashcraft	Polson	MD
71	John Cole	Kalispell	MD
72	Jon McDonald	Billings	MD
73	Josh Colvin	Bozeman	CNA
74	Julie Topping	Bozeman	MD
75	Juliet Hansen	Bozeman Health Pediatrics	MD
76	Kael Fry	Bozeman	LMFT
77	Kaitlyn Frenk	Billings	PA-C
78	Katherine Kent	Billings	Medical Student
79	Kathleen Porco	Red Lodge	CDCES, NBC-HWC
80	Kathryn Borgenicht, M.D.	Bozeman	MD
81	Kathryn Lowe	Bozeman	MD
82	Kathryn Lysinger	Billings Clinic	MD
83	Katie D'Ardenne	Bozeman	MD
84	Kaycee Snelling	Billings	RN

85	Lane McGill	Broadus	Medical Student
86	Larry Severa	Billings	MD
87	Laura Goodell	Bozeman	MD
88	Laura Kirschenmann	Billings	CPhT
89	Lauren Russell	Bozeman	MT
90	Lauren Wilson	Missoula	MD
91	Laurie McKinney	Bozeman	RN
92	Leslie Poling	Billings	MD
93	Linda Waring	Bozeman	MD
94	Lisa Gushwa	Bozeman	MD
95	Lisa Ponfick	Helena	MD
96	Lynne Foss	Bozeman	CPNP-PC
97	Maclean Turner	Billings	Medical Student
98	Maddie Gilstrap	Bozeman	BS
99	Maddison Hayes	Bozeman	CNA
100	Madeline Cade	Helena	CNA
101	Marcella Fussell	Butte	RN
102	Maria Michael	Bozeman	MD
103	Marie Jenson	Polson	RN
104	Mary Drake	Bozeman	MD
105	Maureen Sheehan	Bozeman	MD
106	Megan Evans	Dillon	MD
107	Megan Poser	Billings	NP
108	Meghan Johnston	Bozeman,	MD
109	Melissa Casper	Bozeman	MD
110	Merrill Taylor	Helena	RN
111	Michael Herring	Bozeman Health	MD
112	Mike Spinelli	Bozeman Health	MD FACP
113	Naomi Kolb	Missoula	RN
114	Natascha nicole Meissner Pearson	Bozeman	MD, PhD
115	Niamh Linehan	Bozeman	PA
116	Nicole Cottom	Dillon	FNP-BC
117	Pam Hiebert MD	Bozeman	MD
118	Pam Lehnen	Billings	LPN
119	Parker Blekkenk	Bozeman	Medical Student
120	Patricia Notario	Billings	MD FAAP
121	Pepper Heyon, MD	Bozeman	MD
122	Philip A. Bain	Bozeman	MD
123	Quin Stevens	Kalispell	Medical Student
124	Rachel Schumacher	Dillon	RN
125	Robert McDermott	Billings Clinic	MD
126	Ryan Demmendaal	Bozeman	EMT, Medical Student

127	Ryan Schwanke	Billings	MD
128	Samantha Lewis	Bozeman	RN
129	Sarah Borduin	Butte	RN
130	Sarah Bronsky	Bozeman	MD
131	Sarah Morgan	Bozeman	MD
132	Seth Pincus	Bozeman	MD
133	Shawna Sprandel	Billings Clinic	LCSW
134	Shawna Yates	Butte	DO
135	Shelly Eagen	Billings	APNP
136	Sidney Williamson	Bozeman	MD
137	sophia thompson	Bozeman	CNA and Nursing Student
138	Stacey Pascoe	Bozeman Health	PharmD, BCPP, CPP
139	Stacey Ziegler	Bozeman Health	NP
140	Susan Burton	Butte	CNM
141	Sydney McKee	Bozeman	Medical Student
142	Tara Faris	Bozeman Health	BSN, RN, ONC
143	Tara Lee	Kalispell	RN
144	Thomas Kelly	Bozeman	MD
145	Tory Katz Kelly MD	Bozeman	MD
146	Tracy Fairbanks	Bozeman Health	MD
147	Tracy Karro	Bozeman	RN
148	Trisha Mitchell	Bozeman	MD
149	Vanessa Vandersloot	Billings Clinic	MA
150	Zachary Sturges	Bozeman Health Hospital/Absaroka Emergency Physicians	MD
151	Zoe Unruh	Billings Clinic	RN