



CITY OF HOUSTON

Sylvester Turner

Mayor

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April 14, 2021

The Honorable Stephanie Click
Chair, House Public Health Committee
Austin, Texas 78711

Re: House Bills 1424 and 1399

Dear Chairwoman Click,

As Mayor of Houston, my first concern is for public safety for all Houstonians. As the most diverse city in the United States, Houston stands as a collection for different faiths, ideas, and cultures that come together as one community. I am concerned that House Bill 1421 and 1399 target some members of our community as undeserving of care. Because of this, I respectfully write this letter of opposition to these two pieces of legislation.

House Bill 1424 by Rep. Oliverson would allow health care providers and employees to refuse to medically treat, “directly or indirectly,” those they find objectionable under religious pretense.

House Bill 1399 by Rep. Krause would ban recommended, gender-affirming health care for transgender youth. This bill would prohibit doctors from providing best practice transition care for transgender youth and prohibits professional liability insurance from covering transition-related care.

Both pieces of legislation effect people who are LGBTQ+. Many in this community already face ugly discrimination in our society and would now have to contend with refusal or prohibition of medical care solely because of who they are. No provider should be allowed to legally deny medically necessary care for discriminatory reasons. That’s not who we are as Texans.

In Houston, we don’t care who you are or who you love. What matters is you are a Houstonian. Whether that’s Mayor Annise Parker who served in this office before me or Municipal Judge Phyllis Frye, members of our LGBTQ+ community are Houstonians and could be refused medical care under these bills. That’s why I urge you to vote against these bills and not enshrine discrimination into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sylvester Turner".

Sylvester Turner
Mayor

