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DOJ Withdraws Legal Challenge to Tennessee Ban on Transgender Procedures for Minors

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In a significant shift, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has officially withdrawn its lawsuit against the state of Tennessee over its law banning gender-related medical procedures for minors. The decision marks a notable moment in the ongoing national debate surrounding gender identity and parental rights, as the Trump administration continues to place boundaries around such treatments for children under the age of 18.

The DOJ's Civil Rights Division, under Attorney General Pam Bondi, confirmed on Monday that it had dismissed the lawsuit originally filed during the Biden administration. The suit challenged *Senate Bill 1*, which prohibits medical professionals from administering puberty blockers and hormone therapy to minors diagnosed with gender dysphoria, a psychological condition where a person's gender identity differs from their biological sex. According to Bondi, the DOJ determined that pursuing the case "does not serve the public interest," signaling a clear departure from the previous administration's legal approach.

Gender-affirming care, defined broadly as psychological, behavioral, and, in some cases, medical interventions, has been hotly contested across the political landscape. While advocates argue that these measures are crucial for transgender youth, others raise serious concerns about long-term effects, parental rights, and the role of government in regulating child healthcare. Notably, gender-related surgeries on minors remain exceedingly rare, and even supporters of such care acknowledge that most procedures involve hormone-based treatments rather than surgery.

Although prominent medical groups such as the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the American Medical Association (AMA) support access to gender-related care, the political and legal landscape is shifting. Many Republican-led states have introduced similar legislation, citing the need to protect children from irreversible decisions before adulthood.

The original DOJ lawsuit under the Biden administration argued that Tennessee's law violated the 14th Amendment's Equal Protection Clause, as it restricted treatments for transgender minors that were otherwise available to other youths. However, that argument suffered a major setback when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 6-3 last month in favor of Tennessee, allowing the law to stand. The decision fell along ideological lines, with conservative justices forming the majority.

In her dissent, Justice Sonia Sotomayor argued that the Court had failed to protect vulnerable youth, stating: "Tennessee's ban applies no matter what a minor's parents and doctors think, with no regard for the severity of the minor's mental health conditions or the extent to which treatment is medically necessary." Her concerns, however, did not sway the Court's ruling.

Assistant Attorney General Harmeet Dhillon praised the withdrawal of the case, stating that the DOJ has "undone one of the injustices the Biden administration inflicted upon the country." Bondi echoed that sentiment, calling the Supreme Court's ruling "the right

decision” and reaffirming the administration’s commitment to defending what it views as common-sense protections for children.

As the legal dust settles, Tennessee’s law remains in effect, reflecting a broader conservative push to reassert parental oversight, uphold traditional medical standards, and limit government endorsement of controversial medical interventions for minors. This development also signals the Trump administration’s firm stance on cultural issues that continue to divide the nation, particularly in matters involving children and medical autonomy.