

The Texas State Employees Union, CWA 6186 is outraged. Our members who are charged with protecting children and families are being ordered to violate long-standing codes of ethics that include provision of gender affirming care. Governor Abbott's letter violates the civil rights and privacy of children and their families. It exposes Texas Department of Family and Protective Services workers to moral injury and professional censor by demanding that they go against their moral beliefs and the standards of their professions.

I spoke with two of our members last night.

The first is a supervisor in Family and Protective Services, Region 6A. This is a quote:

"6 months ago, we had a youth in Children Without Placement who was transgender. She was placed with another female. Her medication was provided and held at a certain temperature. We made her feel comfortable and not like an outcast.

If she was in our care today, we would still be doing all those things.

Why is the Governor targeting this specific community? It's hard to see the safety concern when the agency is respecting rights and needs of the child. Providing therapy. Providing prescription medical care.

It's baffling and disturbing."

I also spoke with Samantha, an Alternative Response Case Worker with DFPS.

"I am terrified for families with transgender children.

There was a case I investigated where the family fully supported their child who was transgender. Now, because I documented the details of their support for the child, it will be seen as premeditated if they provide gender affirming care in the future. It should be celebrated that a family fully supports their child. I saw this as strength and not a worry.

Teens who are transgender are more likely to attempt or even commit suicide. This will add to those numbers. Our priority should be safety. Political stunts should not include children."

We believe that Attorney General Ken Paxton's opinion and Governor Abbott's directive will be found to be illegitimate and unconstitutional in the Courts. Meanwhile, as representatives of state workers and advocates for all children and their families, the Texas State Employees Union will do everything in our power to support and defend workers and families who make the hard choice to stand up to the directive, against any retaliation and abuse.

We urge all Texans to stand up to the cruel and illegal orders that amount to child abuse and that target the state workers who protect and support children every day.