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**AG SKRMETTI LEADS THIRTEEN STATE COALITION DEMANDING U.S.
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE RESPECT FREE SPEECH RIGHTS OF CRITICS OF
IRREVERSIBLE PEDIATRIC TRANSGENDER PROCEDURES**

Nashville - Tennessee Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti is leading a coalition of state attorneys general demanding U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland respect the First Amendment rights of people who criticize irreversible transgender treatments for minors.

The thirteen attorneys general [write](#) in response to a letter to Garland from several medical organizations which [called](#) for investigations and prosecution of those who criticize the medical establishment's current treatment of adolescent gender issues. Specifically, the organizations called for the prosecution not just of those who commit or threaten violence against clinics, but also against those who "provoke" such threats.

The coalition of AGs emphatically agrees that anyone engaged in violent crime or threats of violence should be prosecuted by the appropriate authorities but is equally adamant that the federal government cannot investigate or prosecute critics for their speech. Even if criticism of pediatric transgender treatments might provoke strong reactions, it is still entirely protected by the First Amendment.

The letter notes that other countries, including Britain, Sweden, Finland, and France, have all recently restricted the medical treatment of pediatric gender dysphoria. It also recognizes that American medical organizations have adopted inappropriate treatments in the past.

The letter argues that the best way to ensure the best health outcomes for children is to permit criticism of current practices. The multi-state coalition concludes by respectfully demanding that Attorney General Garland "stand down and allow the national conversation to continue."

"The right to disagree stands as the most fundamental American right," said Skrmetti. "Government can never criminalize criticism. Especially when something as important as our kids' long-term well-being is at stake, we need to allow for open discussion and constant questioning."

Joining Tennessee in the letter are the attorneys general from the following states: Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, Oklahoma, Nebraska, South Carolina, Texas, and West Virginia.