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TN AG SKRMETTI JOINS BRIEF SUPPORTING FLORIDA'S BAN ON MEDICAID FUNDS FOR GENDER TRANSITIONING PROCEDURES

Nashville– Tennessee Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti joined 16 states in filing an amicus brief supporting Florida's healthcare regulation that denies Medicaid coverage for gender transitioning procedures. After commissioning a comprehensive review of the medical literature, the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration determined that the available scientific evidence does not support the use of puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and reassignment surgeries as safe and effective treatments for gender dysphoria. Alabama's brief was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida.

"Biased special interest groups cannot bully a state into adopting bad policy," General Skrmetti said. "Mounting evidence has persuaded a growing number of European countries that puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and irreversible surgery are not appropriate treatments for kids showing symptoms of gender dysphoria. Florida has every right to jump off the bandwagon and focus its efforts on mental health treatment."

While the plaintiffs challenging Florida's regulation relied heavily on medical interest groups to argue that transitioning treatments are supported by medical opinion, Alabama's brief points out that these groups are at odds with European governmental healthcare authorities that have, like Florida, openly assessed the evidence base for the treatments. After doing so, the brief notes, healthcare authorities in the United Kingdom, Sweden, Finland, and Norway all "called for drastically curtailing the availability of transitioning treatments for minors."

The brief also argues that medical interest groups such as the American Academy of Pediatrics and the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) operate as self-interested advocacy organizations when it comes to transitioning treatments. The brief highlights a number of episodes that reveal that these medical organizations have suppressed dissent and rebuffed calls from doctors for a transparent review of their policies. "The interest groups do not represent 'medical opinion,'" the brief concludes, "just an outspoken slice of it."

General Skrmetti has been assisting Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall's as numerous states and many countries around the world have grown concerned about how best to help the skyrocketing number of children suffering from gender dysphoria and other forms of gender-related psychological distress. For the past year, the Alabama Attorney General's Office has been defending the State's law prohibiting the use of gender transitioning hormones and surgeries on minors. The Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals is currently considering Alabama's appeal of the district court's preliminary injunction order. The trial is set to begin in August.

In addition to General Skrmetti and General Marshall, state attorneys general signed onto the brief from Arkansas, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Carolina, Texas, Utah and Virginia.

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