



# American Parents Coalition

May 13, 2026

**The Honorable Bill Cassidy, M.D.**

Chairman, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**The Honorable Brett Guthrie**

Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Re: The American Academy of Pediatrics Putting Political Advocacy Over  
Children's Wellbeing, Disregard for Federal Policy, While Using Federal Funding**

Dear Chairman Cassidy and Chairman Guthrie:

On behalf of the American Parents Coalition, I write to urge the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) and the House Committee on Energy and Commerce (E&C) to examine the federal funding received by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). The AAP has seemingly abandoned its role as a scientific body, substituting political advocacy for evidence-based medicine, and openly defying President Trump's executive order on transgender medical interventions for children, all while receiving millions of dollars in taxpayer-funded federal grants.

**The AAP Is Pushing a Political Agenda**

The AAP describes itself as a professional body dedicated to "the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults."<sup>1</sup> Its conduct tells a different story. At its 2025 Leadership Conference, **98 percent** of AAP members voted to make securing federal protection and payment for so-called "gender-affirming care"

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<sup>1</sup> American Parents Coalition, "The Lookout: American Academy of Pediatrics," April 2, 2026.  
<https://americanparentscoalition.org/the-lookout-american-academy-of-pediatrics/>

the organization's top legislative resolution,<sup>2</sup> seemingly the priority of a political group rather than a medical organization.

The AAP has continued to recommend puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones as "reversible" and "partially reversible" treatments for minors,<sup>3</sup> even as other medical reports highlight the harms of these treatments for children. A 2025 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) evidence review found that medical and surgical sex-reassignment procedures for minors lack proven benefit and carry significant risks.<sup>4</sup> The United Kingdom's National Health Service independently concluded that the medical pathway "may not be the best way" to address gender-related distress in young people and advised "extreme caution" regarding hormonal therapy for minors.<sup>5</sup> The American Society of Plastic Surgeons walked back its guidance entirely, disavowing sex-change procedures for children and citing insufficient evidence and potential harms, including infertility, bone density loss, and neurocognitive impacts.<sup>6</sup>

Even with new evidence contradicting AAP's guidance, the organization seems to be playing politics. For example, when HHS invited the AAP to submit its guidelines for independent peer review, the organization refused.<sup>7</sup> HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has publicly described the AAP's recommendations as "just a pay-to-play scheme to promote commercial ambitions,"<sup>8</sup> and Do No Harm Chief Medical Officer Kurt Miceli has stated that the AAP is misrepresenting "the low quality of evidence" supporting these interventions, which "can cause lasting harm" to children, and called on the organization to "re-evaluate their policy statement and follow the American Society of Plastic

Surgeons in opposing these harmful, unscientific, and dangerous practices on American kids."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Mallon, Elaine "Top Pediatricians Group Accused of Coaching Doctors to Hide Kids' Sexual Health from Parents," Fox News, March 27, 2026. <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/aap-faces-pressure-over-trans-youth-care-guiding-docs-keep-parents-dark-about-childs-sexual-health>

<sup>3</sup> Rafferty, Jason, et al. "Ensuring Comprehensive Care and Support for Transgender and Gender-Diverse Children and Adolescents." *Pediatrics*, vol. 142, no. 4, 2018, e20182162, American Academy of Pediatrics, <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/142/4/e20182162/37381/Ensuring-Comprehensive-Care-and-Support-for>

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Treatment for Pediatric Gender Dysphoria: Review of Evidence and Best Practices. Foreword & Executive Summary*. Nov. 2025, <https://opa.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2025-11/gender-dysphoria-report-exec-summary.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Cass, Hilary. *Independent Review of Gender Identity Services for Children and Young People: Final Report*. NHS England, 2024. <https://cass.independent-review.uk/home/publications/final-report/>

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "HHS Leaders Commend the American Society of Plastic Surgeons for Disavowing Pediatric Sex-Rejecting Procedures." *HHS.gov*, 3 Feb. 2026, <https://www.hhs.gov/press-room/asps-gender-dysphoria-statement.html>

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Supplement to Treatment for Pediatric Gender Dysphoria: Review of Evidence and Best Practices: Peer Reviews and Replies*. Nov. 2025, <https://opa.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2025-11/gender-dysphoria-report-supplement.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Kennedy, Robert F., Jr. "This Is a Screenshot from American Academy of Pediatrics," 19 Aug. 2025, <https://x.com/SecKennedy/status/1957914911415153107>

<sup>9</sup> Mallon, Elaine. "AAP Faces Pressure Over Trans Youth Care, Guiding Docs to Keep Parents 'Dark' About Child's Sexual Health." *Fox News*, 27 Mar. 2026, <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/aap-faces-pressure-over-trans-youth-care-guiding-docs-keep-parents-dark-about-childs-sexual-health>

The AAP's politicization extends across its institutional structure. Its CEO, Mark Del Monte, has declared that AAP will fight policies that limit access to care and undermine "equity, diversity and inclusion."<sup>10</sup> The organization created a "Staff Diversity and Inclusion Council," launched a formal Equity Agenda in 2020, and promoted outside activist groups including The Trevor Project, which hosts TrevorSpace, a platform that has allowed adults to communicate with children without parental knowledge or consent.<sup>11</sup> These kinds of actions seem like less of a pediatric medical society and more like an ideological advocacy operation using the credibility of medicine as cover for its political agenda.

### **The AAP Is Deliberately Excluding Parents from Their Children's Medical Care**

Among the most alarming actions we have seen is the AAP's guidance that cuts parents out of their children's healthcare.<sup>12</sup> The AAP developed an Adolescent Health Care Toolkit, which includes training materials distributed to its 67,000 member physicians instructing pediatricians to conduct confidential conversations with minors about sexual activity, gender identity, and emergency contraception, specifically highlighting how to bypass parental involvement and intentionally withhold information from parents.<sup>13</sup>

In one toolkit training video, a pediatrician counsels a 17-year-old patient about same-sex sexual activity and assures the minor that the discussion "stayed between the two of us." The physician discusses birth control, STI prevention, and ends by prescribing emergency contraception, without any parental input or notification.<sup>14</sup> In a second video, a physician assures a 15-year-old girl who identifies as "gender-queer-demi-boy" and has not disclosed this to her parents that the information will remain between the two of them.<sup>15</sup>

A 2023 AAP blog post instructs physicians that when a parent and child disagree about gender interventions, doctors must "acknowledge parents' concerns but always support your patient."<sup>16</sup> In plain terms, the AAP is directing its member physicians to override parental judgment in favor of an ideological framework.

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<sup>10</sup> Halston, Anne. "AAP CEO Calls for Action, Rational Optimism in the Face of Challenges." *AAP News*, American Academy of Pediatrics, 2025, <https://publications.aap.org/aapnews/news/32782/AAP-CEO-calls-for-action-rational-optimism-in-the?autologincheck=redirected>

<sup>11</sup> American Parents Coalition. "The Lookout: American Academy of Pediatrics." *American Parents Coalition*, <https://americanparentscoalition.org/the-lookout-american-academy-of-pediatrics/>

<sup>12</sup> Parents Coalition. "The Lookout: American Academy of Pediatrics." *American Parents Coalition*, <https://americanparentscoalition.org/the-lookout-american-academy-of-pediatrics/>.

<sup>13</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics. "Adolescent Health Care Campaign Toolkit." *American Academy of Pediatrics*, <https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/campaigns-and-toolkits/adolescent-health-care/>

<sup>14</sup> Academy of Pediatrics. "Adolescent Health Care Campaign Toolkit." *American Academy of Pediatrics*, [https://players.brightcove.net/6056665225001/default\\_default/index.html?videoId=6347326040112](https://players.brightcove.net/6056665225001/default_default/index.html?videoId=6347326040112)

<sup>15</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics. "Adolescent Health Care Campaign Toolkit." *American Academy of Pediatrics*, [https://players.brightcove.net/6056665225001/default\\_default/index.html?videoId=6347326241112](https://players.brightcove.net/6056665225001/default_default/index.html?videoId=6347326241112)

<sup>16</sup> Academy of Pediatrics. "Supporting Our Transgender and Gender-Diverse Youth." *American Academy of Pediatrics*, <https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/aap-voices/supporting-our-transgender-and-gender-diverse-youth/>

## **The AAP Is in Open Defiance of the President's Executive Order**<sup>17</sup>

President Trump has been unambiguous: the federal government will not fund or facilitate transgender medical interventions on children. The AAP's response has been defiance, not reconsideration.

AAP immediate past President Susan J. Kressly labeled the Trump administration's restrictions on gender-affirming care a "baseless intrusion" and questioned the credibility of HHS's own evidence review.<sup>18</sup> In June 2025, following the Supreme Court's ruling upholding Tennessee's law banning puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones for minors, President Kressly declared: "To be clear — regardless of today's legal ruling — the science still supports gender-affirming care, children will still need it."<sup>19</sup>

This is not a neutral scientific disagreement. The AAP is an organization that receives millions of federal dollars and has chosen to use its platform to publicly undermine a federal policy aimed at protecting children. It is also an organization whose recommendations extend beyond the AAP itself: the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, another federally funded institution, has hosted workshops with AAP providers who publicly support transgender medical interventions for kids, and even promoted the idea that schools should validate children's gender identity when their own parents refuse to do so.<sup>20</sup>

The legal and regulatory consequences of the AAP's conduct are mounting. In September 2024, 21 state Attorneys General wrote to President Kressly warning that the AAP's guidance on gender dysphoria "is based more on political pressure and agendas rather than medical efficacy and sound medical judgement" and that continuing to describe puberty blockers as "safe and reversible" may run "afoul of consumer protection laws."<sup>21</sup> In December 2025, Florida Attorney General James Uthmeier filed suit against the AAP, WPATH, and the Endocrine Society, alleging they misled parents and the public about the safety and efficacy of these interventions.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> The White House. "Protecting Children from Chemical and Surgical Mutilation." 28 Jan. 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/protecting-children-from-chemical-and-surgical-mutilation/>

<sup>18</sup> Sulaski Wyckoff, Alyson. "AAP Proposed Restrictions to Gender-Affirming Care." *AAP News*, American Academy of Pediatrics, 11 Dec. 2024, <https://publications.aap.org/aapnews/news/33988/AAP-Proposed-restrictions-to-gender-affirming-care>

<sup>19</sup> Jenco, Melissa "AAP High Court Ruling Sets Dangerous Precedent." *AAP News*, American Academy of Pediatrics June 18, 2025. <https://publications.aap.org/aapnews/news/32456/AAP-High-court-ruling-sets-dangerous-precedent>

<sup>20</sup> American Parents Coalition, "The Lookout: National Academies," April 21, 2026. <https://americanparentscoalition.org/the-lookout-national-academies/>

<sup>21</sup> Letter from 21 State Attorneys General to AAP President Susan J. Kressly, led by Idaho Attorney General Raúl Labrador, September 2024.

<sup>22</sup> Florida Attorney General James Uthmeier, Lawsuit Against AAP, WPATH, and the Endocrine Society, December 2025.

In 2026, the Federal Trade Commission opened a probe into the AAP for possible false claims in the promotion of gender dysphoria treatments for children.<sup>23</sup>

### **The AAP Received \$19 Million in Federal Grants and Sued to Keep Them**

In FY2025, the American Academy of Pediatrics received approximately **\$19 million** in grants from HHS.<sup>24</sup> When the Trump administration terminated seven multimillion-dollar grants, citing the AAP's misalignment with federal priorities, a federal judge ordered the restoration of nearly \$12 million in January 2026<sup>25</sup> and continues to receive federal funding in FY2026.

We appreciate the Senate HELP Committee's ongoing investigation into medical organizations, including the AAP, for promoting puberty blockers onto kids.<sup>26</sup> This decisive action is important to parents across the country who want to protect their children from harm. We respectfully request the Senate HELP Committee and the House Energy and Commerce Committee to examine the AAP's federal funding and ensure that federal funding conditions require compliance with presidential executive orders, including the prohibition on federally supported transgender medical interventions for minors.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has made its priorities plain. It has chosen political advocacy over the wellbeing of children, and activist ideology over parental rights.

American Parents Coalition stands ready to provide additional information needed to support your committees' work. Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to protecting children and families.

Respectfully,



**Alleigh Marré**

Executive Director

American Parents Coalition

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<sup>23</sup> Federal Trade Commission, Probe into AAP for Possible False Claims in Promoting Gender Dysphoria Treatments for Minors, 2026.

<sup>24</sup> USAspending.gov. *USAspending.gov*, U.S. Department of the Treasury, <https://www.usaspending.gov/search?hash=b7cd9cfa984ead2bfb500c08c05a5a43>

<sup>25</sup> Schering, Steve. "Federal Judge Orders Reinstatement of AAP Funding." *AAP News*, American Academy of Pediatrics, 12 Jan. 2026, <https://publications.aap.org/aapnews/news/34138/Federal-judge-orders-reinstatement-of-AAP-funding>

<sup>26</sup> Cassidy, Bill. "*Ranking Member Cassidy Launches Investigation into Medical Organizations Promoting Puberty Blockers, Gender Transition Procedures for Children Against Scientific Data.*" U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions, 10 Oct. 2024, <https://www.help.senate.gov/rep/newsroom/press/ranking-member-cassidy-launches-investigation-into-medical-organizations-promoting-puberty-blockers-gender-transition-procedures-for-children-against-scientific-data>