

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

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December 12, 2024

The Honorable Monica M. Bertagnolli, M.D.
Director
National Institutes of Health
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Dr. Bertagnolli:

I write to request information regarding recent reports that the results of a \$5.7 million federally funded study on puberty-blocking drugs for transgender youth have been withheld due to the researchers' political considerations.¹ Allegations suggest that findings from "The Impact of Early Medical Treatment in Transgender Youth" study, which indicated puberty blockers for adolescents with gender dysphoria did not lead to mental health improvements, were intentionally concealed to avoid influencing ongoing legal and public debates. These actions raise serious questions about the ethical and transparent use of taxpayer-funded research.

According to media reports, Dr. Johanna Olson-Kennedy, the lead investigator for the National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded Trans Youth Care study, intentionally blocked publication of the findings. By Dr. Olson-Kennedy's own admission, the publication was blocked to prevent use of the findings in potential court cases challenging state laws on puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones for minors. This decision to withhold federally funded data is particularly concerning given the Supreme Court's pending consideration of a case that relies on scientific assertions about the effectiveness of these treatments for gender dysphoric adolescents. Reports also suggest that despite these unpublished findings, Dr. Olson-Kennedy and her team have continued prescribing puberty blockers to minors. Taxpayer funded research is expected to be published in accordance with the NIH Public Access Policy so medical professionals have access to all available scientific information when making clinical decisions.

For these reasons, I request the following information in complete, original, and unredacted form no later than 5:00 p.m. on December 26, 2024:

1. All records relating to the NIH-funded Trans Youth Care study, including but not limited to:
 - a. Reports and communications within NIH regarding the study;
 - b. Documents and communications on findings, preliminary or otherwise, related to puberty blockers;

¹ Azeen Ghorayshi, *U.S. Study on Puberty Blockers Goes Unpublished Because of Politics, Doctor Says*, N.Y. TIMES (Oct. 23, 2024), <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/23/science/puberty-blockers-olson-kennedy.html>.

- c. Records on the funding of the study;
 - d. Records on the publication process of the study's findings;
 - e. Records regarding suicide or suicidal ideation among study participants; and
 - f. Records regarding litigation involving state laws restricting access to puberty blockers or cross-sex hormones.
2. All records in the possession of Dr. Olson-Kennedy relating to the study, including but not limited to:
- a. Communications and findings, preliminary or otherwise, on puberty blockers; and
 - b. Records concerning publication or withholding of study findings.

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized by Rule XXV of the standing Rules of the Senate and Senate Resolution 59 of the 118th Congress to investigate “the efficiency and economy of operations of all branches and functions of the Government”.²

I appreciate your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Rand Paul, M.D.
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland
Security and Governmental Affairs

² S. Rule XXV(k)(2)(B); S. Res. 59, Sec. 12(e).