

ERLC files U.S. Supreme Court legal brief to stop gender transition surgeries for minors

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NASHVILLE, Tenn., October 15, 2024 –The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention filed a U.S. Supreme Court amicus brief today in *United States v. Skrmetti*, to defend a Tennessee law prohibiting all “gender transition” procedures for minors.

The brief was filed in conjunction with the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board in support of the state of Tennessee and the other respondents in the consolidated case. The ERLC originated the brief, providing the justices a compelling legal argument within the framework of biblical convictions regarding gender and sexuality.

“The Supreme Court’s decision will have a monumental impact on the safety and security of children vulnerable to a harmful gender ideology, not just in the state of Tennessee, but across the nation,” said Brent Leatherwood, president of the ERLC. “Harmful procedures, like hormone therapy, puberty blockers, and surgery impose lifelong, devastating consequences on their well-being. An amicus brief allows the ERLC to put these convictions and arguments in front of our justices and in many cases, can sway the outcome of the case.”

Randy C. Davis, president and executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board, also commented on the *Skrmetti* case.

“Tennessee Baptists stand behind the state of Tennessee in its protection of vulnerable lives and refusal to succumb to a culture confused on matters of gender,” said Davis. “The Baptist Faith & Message 2000 rightly proclaims, ‘Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God’s creation.’ To that end, it would be devastating for the Supreme Court to rule in a manner that strikes down this law that sets an important precedent and protects children.”

The law in question, Senate Bill 1 (S.B. 1), was passed by the Tennessee State Legislature, March 1, 2023, preventing healthcare providers from prescribing medications or performing procedures on minors to “transition” to an identity opposite of their biological sex.

In response to S.B. 1, three “transgender” individuals, their parents, and the American Civil Liberties Union quickly filed a lawsuit alleging Tennessee violated the Equal Protection Clause and the Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment. The Biden administration’s Department of Justice joined the suit arguing the United States has a vested national interest in preventing the law from taking effect. More information about the case can be found in an ERLC Explainer.