
2016: What a Year!

Q. Who would've thought U.S. taxpayers would fund sex-changes for military personnel?

Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced the Defense Department's new transgender policy on June 30, 2016, explaining its three-stage time-line as follows:

- June 30, 2016** Transgender service members may openly serve in the U.S. military.
October 1, 2016 Military services will provide gender transition medical care to members.
July 2, 2017 Services begin accepting transgender members into the military.

Stage two of the above strategy superseded the military's transgender policy of 2015, when the Department of Defense issued the new 18-page transgender policy¹ for U.S. military reserves and active members.

Military personnel already serving when Defense Secretary Carter made his announcement on June 30th could begin the official gender-change process 90 days later, which was October 1st. When the transition is complete, the subject will wear the uniform consistent with the preferred gender (sexual behavior) and use bunks, bathrooms, and shower facilities, accordingly.

The gender transition process in the military "begins when a service member receives a diagnosis from a military medical provider indicating that gender transition² is medically necessary, and concludes when the service member's gender marker³ in DEERS⁴ is changed and the member is recognized in the preferred⁵ gender."

The document explains "cross-sex hormone therapy" as hormones for males who identify as female and masculinizing hormones for females who present as male.

The military will provide transgender service members⁶ ID documents as follows:

- A certified true copy of a State birth certificate reflecting the individual's preferred gender;
- A certified true copy of a court order reflecting the individual's preferred gender; and
- A U.S. passport reflecting the individual's preferred gender.

Active service members and reserve service members will have the same considerations.

Beginning in 2018 and every three years thereafter, an Inspector General will review the response of military branches to determine compliance and implementation of this process.

¹ Department of Defense Instruction 1300.28 "In-Service Transition for Transgender Service Members," October 1, 2016

² Period of time when individuals change from the gender role associated with their biological sex to a different gender role. Transition may or may not include feminization or masculinization of the body through cross-sex hormone therapy or other medical procedures. The nature and duration of transition are variable and individualized.

³ Data identifying a service member's gender (preferred sexual behavior)

⁴ Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System

⁵ The identity in which a transgender individual will be recognized when gender transition is complete

⁶ Those who (a) have received a medical diagnosis indicating gender transition is medically necessary, (b) are beginning transition, (c) undergoing transition, (d) completed transition, or (e) are stable in the preferred gender

Q. Who would've thought the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) would fire a public health director for sermons he preached as assistant pastor at his church?

After a lengthy interviewing process, the Georgia DPH hired Dr. Eric Walsh on May 7, 2014 to serve as a District Health Director, but, stunningly, fired him several days later. It was stunning because a DPH official said he was “quite certain” they would not see “a more qualified candidate” and, actually, recommended paying him a better salary because, “For the long term building of GA DPH this guy would be worth the few extra bucks!”

But, obviously, other department heads thought differently. On May 14, 2014, the DPH Director of Human Resources sent the following email to other department employees:

“OK ... I have an assignment for several of us, we have to listen to his sermons on YouTube tonight. If we take a couple of hours each, then we should cover our bases.”

Disregarding his impeccable credentials – expert in public health, multiple advanced degrees, President’s Advisory Council on AIDS, Pasadena Public Health Director – the next morning, a meeting was held to discuss his employment at DPH and the day after that, he was fired¹. He was interviewed May 7, 2014, hired May 14, 2014, fired May 16, 2014.

Since his sermons at church and elsewhere had nothing to do with his duties or qualifications for employment at DPH, Dr. Walsh wrote the EEOC about his abrupt release and described himself as a Seventh-day Adventist Church “devout member,” who shares his faith regularly at churches and religious conferences. He, also, serves as lay minister of his church.

On September 23, 2014 on behalf of Dr. Walsh, First Liberty Institute and co-counsel from Parks, Chesin & Walbert filed with the EEOC an official charge of discrimination, charging the Georgia DPH with religious discrimination and retaliation for firing him over the content of his sermons, that reflected religious positions of himself and his church on various issues, including homosexuality and evolution.

Walsh received a Right to Sue Letter from the EEOC on February 2, 2016, and on April 20, 2016 the First Liberty Institute filed a lawsuit against the Georgia DPH. On September 28, 2016 the State of Georgia served Walsh with a Request for Production of Documents, demanding copies of his sermon notes and transcripts. The Request with no specified subject, no time frame, and no end to its demands has the full force of a subpoena.

On October 26, 2016 Walsh announced in a press conference at the State Capitol that he would not surrender his sermons to the state. Two days later, the state partially withdrew the demand. Mike Griffin, who represents Georgia Baptists at the Capitol, explained the situation this way:

“Thanks in part to the public outcry, Attorney General Sam Olens’² request for Walsh to turn in his sermons has been withdrawn. However, not all of the requests have been withdrawn. For example, the State of Georgia still wants Dr. Walsh to produce any and all contracts he has, or has had, with his church and denomination. The state has no business reviewing a contract between a religious denomination and its chosen religious leader.”

¹ Source: First Liberty Institute, Attorneys for Dr. Walsh

² Sam Olens is now in the private sector; Chris Carr, endorsed by Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed, is Georgia’s new attorney general.

Q. Who would've thought “trans” ID would deny and supersede biological sex evidence?

On May 13, 2016, the federal government issued a directive requiring public schools to allow transgender students to use bathrooms and locker rooms based on their gender identity. That directive to mainstream, normalize identities for trans-males (born female, presenting as male) and trans-females (born males, identifying as female) defied centuries of biological facts and cultural standards to bring chaos to U.S. schools, businesses, and the medical profession.

The directive exploded into an instant legal battleground, with states suing over the federal over-reach of power. Some schools obeyed the directive and allowed boys to use the girls' restroom or other facility, if they identify as girls, and vice versa. Non-compliant schools, including those with sex-neutral third restrooms, were threatened with loss of federal funding.

Early this year, members of the medical profession expressed concerns about proposed Health and Human Services regulations that create special gender-identity-based privileges, that may cause conflicts of conscience and legal complications for medical professionals who may be forced to decide between conscience and performing procedures, e.g. “sex reassignment” surgery, that have not been proven effective for treating serious mental health problems.

Georgia. The situation erupted in Fannin County on May 12, 2016 as the local school board was confronted in the school cafeteria by a standing-room-only crowd of disturbed parents overflowing into the gym to discuss the new transgender policy. The meeting lasted three hours. Some parents threatened to take their kids out of school.

Fannin County Superintendent Mark Henson wrote parents that the district would lose federal money – about \$3.5 million – unless they comply, and the district “can’t afford” to lose funds.

On May 13th Georgia House Speaker David Ralston wrote to Georgia’s U.S. Senators Isakson and Perdue asking them to “look into this matter and take appropriate action to protect our students and our local educators from the heavy hand of the federal government,” calling the directive “a vast overreach of federal authority and one that must not go unchallenged.”

School Superintendent’s response: Don’t comply, we have your back. By May 20th State School Superintendent Richard Woods issued a statement to all local school superintendents, explaining his reaction to the federal Executive Branch’s overreach of power. He said:

“We at the Georgia Department believe the ‘Dear Colleague Letter’ openly violates, misinterprets and moves to rewrite established U.S. law. As this guidance does not have the force of law, you are not required to comply with this directive or make changes to your established actions and policies. However, if the federal government does decide to withhold federal funds, enforce this directive, or bring suit against any district in Georgia because of a decision a local district makes, we will work with all parties to take appropriate action.”

Status (a): On behalf of 13 states who filed suit against the policy, U.S. District Court Judge Reed O’Connor, appointed by President George W. Bush, issued a nationwide injunction banning enforcement of the transgender policy in public schools. Other issues are pending.

Status (b): In September, Liberty Counsel revealed that a Civil Rights Commission report on “Peaceful Coexistence” from the **Civil Rights Commission calls for laws that eliminate religious exemptions or accommodation in LGBT cases.** So, if religious exemption laws are eliminated, religious freedom will have been deemed legally inferior to sexual gratification.

Q. Who would've thought a school exclusively for LGBT students would open in Atlanta?

Forty-five-year-old trans-gender male Christian Zsilavets, who has almost 25 years' experience teaching math, founded Pride School Atlanta for K-12 gay, lesbian and transsexual students and their teachers. It's the first of its kind in the Southeastern U.S. and Georgia is the only state in the South with such a school.

A transgender male student explained, "The full acronym is LGBTQQIAA, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, questioning, intersex, ally and agender or asexual. I think it's like both."

Pride School Atlanta, officially, opened in August 2016 for students age 5-18 in rooms 206-208 of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta, 1911 Cliff Valley Way, N.E., Atlanta, but the mailing address is in Decatur, Georgia. Tuition was listed at about \$13,000, with eight students attending on the first day.

Zsilavets said, "I firmly believe that bringing trans rights to the forefront – that we're totally ready for it. Now we can start taking care of our trans youth especially."

Q. Who would've thought The Temple of Satan would ask for after school Satan clubs?

That happened to Still Elementary¹, a Powder Springs school that got the following notice²:

"School districts across the nation have received letters from The Satanic Temple explaining that we will be offering our clubs in their schools this coming school year, and parents in those schools can expect to be presented with a permission slip from their children in the first weeks of the Fall semester. All of the districts we've approached are nearby to local chapters of TST, and each school district has hosted, or is now hosting, Good News Clubs in their schools. This being the case, we are sure that the school districts we've approached are well aware that they are not at liberty to deny us use of their facilities, nor are they at liberty to deny us any level of representation in the schools that they afford to other school clubs – such as fliers, tables, brochures, and school-wide announcements."

As he said, the goal is to eliminate or contradict Good News³ Clubs in schools. Satan clubs have been proposed for nine⁴ schools across the country, including Still Elementary in Georgia.

Q. Who would've thought Satanic Temple wanted to pray at a football field 50-yard line?

In February 2016 the Satanic Temple of Seattle announced that a 12th grader at Bremerton High School wanted his group to join the coach's prayer circle after the next game and perform a satanic invocation. The Bremerton school coach was fired October 28, 2015 for praying at midfield after games, although no complaints had been filed against him and the prayer group had grown as teams, coaches, and members of the public joined in his 30-second prayers.

Q. Who would've thought a minor's HIV/AIDS status would be withheld from parents?

With the passage of Representative Betty Price's H.B. 1058, Georgia parents will no longer be notified of a child diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. The state will provide confidential health care.

¹ Satanic Temple wanted its first club meeting to be on Halloween, once monthly thereafter. Current status is unknown.

² Notice from Satanic Temple spokesman Lucien Greaves (his professional name), a.k.a. Doug Mesner

³ Clubs founded in 1937 by Child Evangelism Fellowship, a Bible-centered, worldwide organization of 1,400 staff members, in over 165 countries, active in every state and province in North America

⁴ Atlanta; Los Angeles; Pensacola; Portland; Salt Lake City; Seattle; Springfield, MO; Tucson; and Washington D.C.