

PRESS RELEASE

PROTECTING FAMILIES & CHILDREN ACT



A Bill for an Act Relating to Public Safety: Protecting Children and Parental Rights

State of Minnesota Legislature | For Immediate Release Upon Introduction

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Upon Introduction in the Minnesota Legislature

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MINNESOTA LEGISLATORS INTRODUCE LANDMARK CHILD PROTECTION LEGISLATION

The Protecting Families & Children Act Prohibits Irreversible Minor Medical Procedures, Bans Classroom Sexualization, Creates Felony Grooming Offense, and Ends Sanctuary-State Overreach

SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA — Legislators in the Minnesota Legislature have introduced the Protecting Families and Children Act (PFCA), a comprehensive child-protection measure that addresses four distinct and documented threats to Minnesota’s children: irreversible medical procedures performed on minors who cannot consent; age-inappropriate sexualized and ideological instruction in schools; online grooming of minors before physical abuse occurs; and Minnesota’s existing “sanctuary” statutes, which have been used to strip out-of-state parents of their parental rights across state lines.

The legislation’s sponsors frame the bill as the restoration of a fundamental obligation. “A government that fails to protect its children has broken faith with its people,” the act declares in its opening article. Every provision in the PFCA answers a specific harm to a specific child — and every provision is backed by enforcement with real consequences.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Bans puberty blockers for gender-transition purposes, cross-sex hormones, and sex-altering surgeries on minors, with narrow medical exceptions and lifetime enforcement remedies.

CLASSROOM SAFETY

Prohibits sexualized and gender-ideology instruction in all K–12 schools; mandates parental notification and records access; establishes criminal penalties up to 10 years for educators who violate prohibitions after written warning.

ONLINE PREDATORS

Creates a standalone felony grooming offense — up to 30 years — for the pattern of online manipulation itself, before any physical contact occurs, with mandatory predatory offender registration upon conviction.

PARENTAL RIGHTS

Repeals Minnesota’s sanctuary statutes; restores home-state custody jurisdiction; guarantees that a parent who declines a gender transition procedure cannot lose custody for that reason alone.

“Every provision in this legislation answers a specific harm to a specific child. This is not a culture-war document. It is a child-protection statute — and it is backed by enforcement provisions serious enough to mean something.”

— [Sponsoring Legislator], Minnesota Legislature

The legislation covers eight articles and amends or repeals fourteen provisions of Minnesota Statutes. It is effective 90 days after final enactment. Full bill text, section-by-section analysis, and legislative talking points are enclosed.

PRESS PACKET CONTENTS

- I. Statements of Principle — Article by Article
- II. Legislative Summaries — The Case for Each Article
- III. The Enforcement Architecture — Why This Law Has Teeth
- IV. The Social Contract — Why Enforcement Is Child Protection

SECTION I

STATEMENTS OF PRINCIPLE

Every statement below is drawn directly from the text, findings, and operative provisions of the PFCA

THE OVERARCHING PRINCIPLE — ARTICLE 1, SECTION 2

“A government that fails to protect its children has broken faith with its people.”

The Social Contract between the people of Minnesota and their government rests on a single, irreducible foundation: the protection of children. When the state permits the irreversible alteration of a child’s body without meaningful consent, allows classrooms to be used to sexualize minors, fails to criminalize online grooming, or uses its courts to strip parents of their children across state lines — it has broken that contract. The Protecting Families and Children Act restores it.

ON CHILDREN’S HEALTH — ARTICLE 1, SEC. 2(A) & ARTICLE 2

“The state has a compelling interest in safeguarding the health, bodily integrity, fertility, and future procreative capacity of minors.”

A child who cannot sign a contract, vote, or purchase a lottery ticket cannot give informed, irrevocable consent to the permanent suppression of natural development, the chemical alteration of secondary sex characteristics, or the surgical removal of healthy organs. The law recognizes this truth everywhere. The PFCA applies it where it matters most: a child’s body — and the irreversible future that body represents.

ON PARENTAL RIGHTS — ARTICLE 1, SEC. 2(C) & ARTICLE 3

“Parents have the fundamental right and duty to direct the upbringing, education, and medical care of their children.”

When a school secretly adopts a new name and new pronouns for a child without parental knowledge, it has not protected the child. It has replaced the parent. This legislation establishes in statutory form that schools serve families — not the other way around. The Parental Bill of Rights in Article 3 is enforceable in court.

ON CLASSROOM SAFETY — ARTICLE 4, SECTION 1

“The primary purpose of public education is academic instruction. The state has a compelling interest in protecting minors from age-inappropriate exposure to sexual content, gender ideology, and instruction that normalizes sexual activity among minors.”

No classroom in Minnesota has a legal right to sexualize children. No institution — public, private, charter, or religious — may teach that biological sex is a matter of personal choice, describe sexual acts in any form, or instruct minors on how to consent to sexual activity. The legislature finds that claims that gender is fluid or self-determined are not sincere religious belief; they are ideological positions this act is designed to address.

ON GROOMING — ARTICLE 1, SEC. 2(E) & ARTICLE 6

“Grooming is a patterned process used to manipulate minors — often online — before physical abuse occurs.”

The law has always waited for physical contact before calling conduct a crime. Predators have exploited that waiting period for decades. The PFCA creates a standalone felony for the grooming process itself — the pattern of manipulation, online or in person, with intent to exploit — and the crime is complete without any physical meeting. We do not wait for the fire to consume the building before calling it arson.

ON THERAPEUTIC FREEDOM — ARTICLE 5, SECTION 2, SUBDIVISION 1

“The purpose of this section is to protect client-directed and freedom-respecting counseling while prohibiting coercive, fraudulent, or aversive practices.”

True therapy follows the patient. A licensing board that mandates a predetermined ideological outcome as a condition of professional practice is not protecting patients — it is controlling them. The PFCA repeals the overbroad existing ban and replaces it with a law that actually tracks the distinction between coercion and choice: coercion is prohibited; freely chosen, client-directed counseling is protected.

ON HOME-STATE JURISDICTION — ARTICLE 1, SEC. 2(G) & ARTICLE 7

“Minnesota should not be used to circumvent lawful home-state child-custody jurisdiction through forum-shopping for disputed minor medical interventions.”

No state has the constitutional right to reach across its borders and take another family’s child. When Minnesota courts accepted jurisdiction over out-of-state families seeking to circumvent their home state’s laws and override a dissenting parent’s custody rights, Minnesota was not acting as a refuge. It was acting as an instrument of parental termination. Article 7 ends that.

ON CONSTRUCTION — ARTICLE 8, SECTION 1

“This act regulates specified conduct and establishes protections and remedies. Nothing in this act may be construed to criminalize or punish mere viewpoints or religious beliefs.”

The PFCA targets what people do in professional and institutional settings — not what they believe. Every penalty attaches to a specific act: performing a prohibited procedure, teaching prohibited content, grooming a child, circumventing a custody order. The law is built on constitutional ground, with seven specific legislative findings providing the justification for each restriction.

SECTION II

WHAT THE LEGISLATION DOES

Persuasive summaries of each article — what it prohibits, what it protects, and why it matters

ARTICLE 2 — PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM IRREVERSIBLE MEDICAL PROCEDURES

The PFCA prohibits three categories of procedures on minors: puberty blockers prescribed for gender-transition purposes; cross-sex hormones; and surgeries that alter or remove healthy sex organs or secondary sex characteristics. The prohibition extends to referrals — because a ban on performing a procedure that permits referral for the same procedure is not a ban; it is a detour. Public funds and insurance coverage for all prohibited procedures are simultaneously eliminated, closing the financial pathways alongside the clinical ones.

The exceptions in Article 2, Section 2 are narrow and medically grounded: treatment of a verifiable disorder of sex development where biological sex is indeterminate; treatment of precocious puberty under established endocrine standards when not used for gender transition; and restoration of normal biological function following injury or disease.

Psychological and psychiatric counseling that does not recommend or prepare a minor for a prohibited procedure is expressly permitted.

The word at the center of this legislation — the word that distinguishes prohibited procedures from permitted treatment — is “healthy.” A surgeon may not alter or remove a healthy sex organ. A physician may treat disease, injury, and genuine biological abnormality. That line is not ideological. It is medical.

ARTICLE 3 — RESTORING PARENTAL AUTHORITY IN MINNESOTA SCHOOLS

The PFCA establishes that schools serve families. Article 3 translates that principle into four enforceable rights: the right to know what is happening to a child (mandatory notification of significant changes in mental, emotional, or physical health); the right to see every record the school maintains about the child, including any records regarding names, pronouns, counseling, or plans; the right to receive 14 days’ advance notice of human sexuality instructional materials and to opt out without penalty; and the right to know that no school employee will implement a social transition without parental knowledge and consent.

Sex-segregated bathrooms, locker rooms, and overnight accommodations based on biological sex apply uniformly to students and staff, with no individual accommodations. Interscholastic athletics participation is determined by biological sex. No school employee or student may be compelled to use language inconsistent with biological sex in violation of sincerely held religious or moral convictions. A parent whose rights are knowingly violated may bring a civil action for declaratory and injunctive relief and recover attorney’s fees.

ARTICLE 4 — ENDING THE SEXUALIZATION OF MINNESOTA’S CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS

Article 4 prohibits five categories of instruction in all K–12 schools in Minnesota: promoting any gender identity other than biological sex; asserting that biological sex is fluid or self-determined; describing or depicting sexual practices or acts in any form; instructing minors how to consent to or solicit sexual activity; and introducing or affirming sexual orientation or gender identity at any grade level, K through 12. These prohibitions apply to classroom instruction, assemblies, counseling, extracurricular programming, guest presentations, and all school-sponsored digital and printed content.

The legislation’s findings make an explicit determination: claims that gender is fluid, non-binary, or self-determined do not constitute sincere religious belief. They are ideological positions this act is designed to address. A narrow religious savings clause protects historically grounded doctrinal teaching — such as the teaching that marriage is a sacred covenant between a man and a woman — but does not exempt any school from the core prohibitions on sexual content or on claims that gender transcends biological sex.

What makes Article 4 different from prior legislative efforts is its enforcement architecture. Criminal liability is not triggered by accident — it requires that the person was specifically warned and continued the conduct anyway. But once warned, the threshold is established as a matter of law, and the penalties reach every level of the institution: teacher, administrator, school board, and the institution itself.

ARTICLE 5 — PROTECTING THE FREEDOM TO COUNSEL WITHOUT COERCION

Minnesota’s existing conversion therapy ban, Minn. Stat. § 214.078, is written broadly enough to prohibit non-coercive, client-directed talk therapy — including counseling freely chosen by an adult or a minor and their parents based on their own values and goals. The PFCA repeals that statute and replaces it with a law that clearly distinguishes coercion from choice.

The new Section 214.078 protects any non-coercive, open-ended, client-directed counseling where the goals are set by the client. For minors, counseling is protected when both the minor and the parent or legal guardian consent. Licensing boards may not require a predetermined ideological outcome as a condition of licensure. What remains prohibited is what was always supposed to be prohibited: physical force, threats, intimidation, blackmail, humiliation, and physically aversive techniques.

ARTICLE 6 — MAKING ONLINE GROOMING A FELONY BEFORE THE FIRST ASSAULT

Article 6 creates Minn. Stat. § 609.352A, a standalone felony for grooming of a minor for sexual exploitation. The crime is a pattern of conduct — two or more acts, in person or electronically, directed at a minor or the minor’s parent or guardian — with intent to manipulate a child toward sexual exploitation, distribute sexually explicit material, arrange a

meeting for the purpose of a sexual offense, or exploit a position of trust to develop a controlling relationship.

The most important structural feature: the offense is complete without physical contact or an in-person meeting. A predator who conducts the entire grooming process through a smartphone has committed a felony under this law. It is not a defense that the victim was an undercover law enforcement decoy, nor that the offender was mistaken about the victim's age — provided the offender believed or had reasonable grounds to believe the victim was a minor. Upon conviction, the offender registers as a predatory offender under Minn. Stat. § 243.166.

ARTICLE 7 — ENDING MINNESOTA'S ROLE AS A PARENTAL-RIGHTS TERMINATION VENUE

Between 2023 and 2024, Minnesota enacted a series of statutes that together created a legal mechanism allowing out-of-state families to bring a child to Minnesota, obtain a gender transition procedure banned in the child's home state, invoke Minnesota court jurisdiction, and terminate or override the parental rights of a dissenting home-state parent. These provisions were enacted under the name of compassion. What they created was a system by which one parent could use a Minnesota court as a weapon against the other.

Article 7 repeals each of these provisions surgically. It also adds Minn. Stat. § 260C.999: a parent's good-faith decision to decline gender transition procedures for their minor child cannot, by itself, constitute abuse, neglect, or grounds for an adverse custody determination — provided the parent supplies necessary care, protection, and support. That single sentence ends the most powerful coercive instrument used against parents who disagree with these procedures: the threat of losing their child.

SECTION III

THE ENFORCEMENT ARCHITECTURE

Why the PFCA has teeth — and why teeth are what child protection requires

Legislation without enforcement is a press release. The PFCA is built differently. Every prohibition is backed by a layered enforcement architecture designed to reach every level of an institution — from the individual practitioner to the board of directors — and to place real consequences at every level.

MEDICAL ENFORCEMENT — ARTICLE 2, SECTION 3

Enforcement for the prohibition on gender transition procedures operates on four simultaneous, independent tracks. No single mechanism is the chokepoint. All four operate in parallel.

TRACK 1 — PROFESSIONAL LICENSING (SUBD. 1)

- A violation constitutes unprofessional conduct subject to discipline by the appropriate licensing board.
- A provider who violates this law cannot accept a fine and continue treating the next patient. License discipline is separate from and cumulative with all other enforcement.

TRACK 2 — ATTORNEY GENERAL & COUNTY ATTORNEYS (SUBD. 2–3)

- The Attorney General may seek injunctive relief, prosecute criminal violations, and recover civil penalties up to \$25,000 per violation.
- County attorneys and local prosecutors in any Minnesota county have identical authority.
- Distributed enforcement prevents any single office from becoming a political bottleneck. Any county in Minnesota can act.

TRACK 3 — PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION (SUBD. 4)

- A minor may bring a civil action upon reaching majority and recover ongoing lifetime healthcare costs for complications, pain and suffering, statutory damages of not less than \$25,000, punitive damages for willful violations, and attorney's fees.
- A parent or guardian may bring the same action on behalf of the minor.
- Statute of limitations: the later of 20 years from majority or 10 years from discovery of injury.
- Health care institutions are liable for the full lifetime cost of complications. These are not capped damages. 'Lifetime healthcare costs' means the actual ongoing cost the patient bears for life.

TRACK 4 — CRIMINAL PENALTIES (SUBD. 5)

- Providers who directly perform procedures: not less than 18 months, not more than 10 years per patient.
- Hospital administrators at whose institutions procedures are performed: not less than 18 months, not more than 5 years per patient.
- Senior health system leadership who permit, authorize, or direct procedures: not less than 18 months, not more than 5 years per patient.
- There are no clean hands in an institution that performs a procedure this law prohibits.

EDUCATION ENFORCEMENT — ARTICLE 4, SECTION 5

The education enforcement structure is the most comprehensive in the legislation — because the classroom is where systematic, institutionally protected violations are most likely to occur, and where accountability at every level of the institution is required.

The ‘Knowingly’ Threshold: Fair, Clear, and Difficult to Evade

No teacher is prosecuted for an accident. Criminal liability requires that the person was specifically warned — in writing, or at a public forum with supporting evidence presented — and then continued the conduct. Article 4, Section 2, Subdivision 3 defines this with precision: delivery of written notice and supporting evidence to the individual, their supervisor, or their institution establishes the threshold as a matter of law for all subsequent conduct of the same character. One warning. One threshold. No ambiguity.

Administrator Compliance Duty: Accountability Before Harm Occurs

Article 4, Section 2, Subdivision 8 imposes an affirmative compliance duty on every school principal, superintendent, and administrator: provide written notice of all prohibitions to every teacher, staff member, counselor, contractor, and volunteer; obtain signed written acknowledgments; complete this within 30 days of enactment, annually, and within 10 business days of any new hire; maintain copies available to the attorney general or law enforcement. An administrator who fails this duty cannot claim lack of notice as a defense and commits an independent offense.

TEACHER/INSTRUCTOR PENALTIES (SUBD. 2)

- Standard violation after notice: 18 months to 3 years and/or \$5,000 per offense.
- Aggravated violation (grade school setting, repeated conduct, or deliberate concealment): 3 to 5 years and/or \$10,000 per offense.
- Second or subsequent conviction: 5 to 10 years and/or \$15,000 per offense.
- Upon any conviction: permanent, irrevocable license revocation and permanent disqualification from any school employment in Minnesota.

ADMINISTRATOR PENALTIES (SUBD. 3)

- Failure to fulfill compliance duty: gross misdemeanor, up to 1 year/\$5,000 per cycle. Bars any defense based on lack of notice to teachers.
- Failure to investigate, remedy, or report a known violation within 10 business days: felony, same tier as teacher penalties, no good-faith defense.
- Upon conviction: permanent removal from any administrative position in any Minnesota school.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER PENALTIES (SUBD. 4)

- Voting to approve, fund, or continue prohibited programming after receiving notice: felony — same tier as teachers, up to 10 years on repeat conviction.
- Upon conviction: immediate removal from office and permanent disqualification from any school board or administrative capacity in Minnesota.
- Decision-makers who fund the harm bear the same exposure as those who deliver it.

MANDATORY REPORTING & INSTITUTIONAL PENALTIES (SUBD. 5–6)

- Teachers must report known violations within 10 business days. Administrators must report to the school board and Attorney General within 10 business days.
- Failure to report: gross misdemeanor (first offense); felony (second or subsequent).
- Institutional civil penalties: \$10,000 to \$100,000 per violation, plus loss of up to 25% of annual state aid until compliance is certified in writing to the Commissioner of Education.

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION, REWARD & INDEMNIFICATION — ARTICLE 4, SECTION 5, SUBDIVISION 8

The whistleblower provisions of the PFCA are among the most robust in Minnesota law — because enforcement depends on people inside institutions having the protection and the incentive to come forward.

THREE-PART WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

- **REWARD:** Any person whose report results in the collection of a fine receives 30% of all fines collected as a direct result of their report, paid before remittance to the state. If the reporter is a minor student, funds are held in trust by the Attorney General and disbursed in full at age 18 — without reduction or condition.
- **INDEMNIFICATION:** Any whistleblower named in a retaliatory proceeding brought by a school or school official must be fully indemnified by the school district — all attorney's fees, costs, and damages. Obligation attaches upon filing of the retaliatory proceeding, not after a finding of liability. A district that fails to indemnify within 30 days faces \$5,000/month in civil penalties.

- ANTI-RETALIATION: Retaliation against a whistleblower is a gross misdemeanor (first offense) and a felony (second or subsequent), subject to the same penalty tiers as the underlying violation.

SECTION IV

THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

Why enforcement is not punitive overreach — it is what the Social Contract requires

Critics of the PFCA have characterized its enforcement provisions as extreme. They are not. They are commensurate. The penalties in this legislation are calibrated to the severity of what they prohibit: the permanent alteration of a child's body without consent; the systematic sexualization of children in institutions of public trust; the manipulation of children by online predators; and the use of state courts to destroy families across state lines.

ENFORCEMENT IS NOT PUNITIVE. IT IS THE PROMISE.

The Social Contract is not a metaphor. It is the foundational agreement between citizens and the governments they create. Its terms are simple: the people grant authority to the government; the government uses that authority to protect those who cannot protect themselves. Children cannot protect themselves. That is the point.

A law that prohibits harm without imposing consequences for causing it is not a protection. It is a suggestion. Surgeons who perform irreversible procedures on children in defiance of a legal prohibition will not be deterred by the possibility of a fine they can factor into the cost of doing business. Administrators who look the other way will not change behavior because of a policy statement. School board members who fund prohibited programming will not stop because someone wrote them a letter.

The enforcement provisions of the PFCA are strong because the harms they address are permanent. Permanent sterilization. Lifelong medical complications. The psychological damage of systematic sexualization in a place a child was supposed to be safe. The destruction of a family by a court in a state the family never chose. These are not misdemeanors of the spirit. They are concrete, measurable, irreversible injuries to real children.

The measure of an enforcement regime is not whether the people who comply with the law find it comfortable. It is whether the people who would violate the law find it credible.

The PFCA is designed to be credible — because the children it protects deserve nothing less.

WHY DISTRIBUTED ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

One of the deliberate design choices in the PFCA is the distribution of enforcement authority across multiple independent actors: the Attorney General, county attorneys and local prosecutors in any Minnesota county, licensing boards, parents through private civil action, and individual citizens through the whistleblower mechanism. When enforcement authority is concentrated in a single office, child protection becomes dependent on the political will of one official. If that official declines to act, the law has no other avenue. The PFCA eliminates that single point of failure.

A county attorney in Hennepin County can act. A county attorney in Beltrami County can act. A parent can act. A teacher who witnesses a violation and reports it can trigger the entire enforcement apparatus independently of what any statewide official chooses to do. That is not an aggressive enforcement structure. It is a resilient one — and resilience is exactly what children need from the laws that are supposed to protect them.

WHY INSTITUTIONAL LIABILITY MATTERS

Institutions are not innocent bystanders to the conduct of their employees. When a hospital performs prohibited procedures on minors, it is not the surgeon alone who made that decision: the clinic accepted the patient, the institution established the protocol, the administration allocated the resources, the health system leadership determined the policy. The PFCA holds each level of that chain accountable, because each level made the decision that allowed the harm to occur.

The same logic applies in education. When a teacher sexualizes children after a written warning, the administrator who failed to investigate, the board member who voted to continue funding the program, and the institution that did nothing are not peripheral figures. They are participants. The PFCA names them as such and holds them accordingly. When the board of a school district understands that a violation can cost the district 25 percent of its state aid, board members have both the authority and the incentive to ensure it does not happen.

THE WHISTLEBLOWER REWARD: MAKING THE INSIDE WORK FOR CHILDREN

Institutional violations of child protection laws do not typically come to light through official inspection. They come to light because someone inside the institution saw something, knew it was wrong, and decided to report it. That decision carries risk: career consequences, damaged relationships, expensive retaliation. The PFCA addresses each risk directly. Retaliation is a crime. The district must indemnify any whistleblower named in a retaliatory proceeding. The person whose report produces results receives a material financial reward.

For the minor student whose 30 percent reward is held in trust by the Attorney General until age 18 and disbursed in full without reduction or condition — that provision is a statement. It says: we see you. We believe you. We will protect you for taking this risk, and we will make sure you receive what you are owed when you are old enough to use it.

THE PROMISE OF THIS LEGISLATION

The Protecting Families and Children Act makes a promise to the children of Minnesota.

It promises that the government of this state will not allow their bodies to be permanently altered without their consent. It promises that the classrooms where they spend their days will not be used to sexualize or manipulate them. It promises that the online spaces where predators operate will no longer be consequence-free zones. It promises that no outside court will be used to take them from a parent who loves them.

And it backs every one of those promises with enforcement provisions serious enough to be believed.

That is the Social Contract. That is what this legislation restores.

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Full bill text, section-by-section analysis, and legislative talking points available upon request.