

Written evidence submitted by Cameron Powell [GRA1882]

My name is Cameron Powell. I am concerned by the current state of the GRA, as well as the reforms proposed by HM government, since I am gender non-conforming and I have friends who are affected by the GRA. If reforming the GRA would not cause more significant harm than the harm caused by failing to reform it, then it should be reformed. To determine whether this is the case, we should examine the potential harm that less rigorous requirements for acquiring a GRC could cause, and compare it to the harm that is being done by the current version of the GRA.

Some people who transition (which acquiring a GRC can be a part of), de-transition in the future and sustain mild to severe emotional, social and financial harm. If the GRA were made less rigorous there might be an increase in the number of de-transitioners. Therefore, one could argue that this is a negative consequence of reforming the GRA. However, the percentage of people that transition who express significant regrets and decide to de-transition is extremely low, most studies putting it at less than one percent. Therefore, by choosing not to reform the GRA in favour of trans people, you are putting the wellbeing of less than one percent of a group over the remaining people in that group. One might claim that the problems de-transitioners face are more significant than those that trans people who are unable to transition face, but for the most part they are identical problems. Gender dysphoria, inability to pursue gender euphoria, generally being unable to live as they want etc. Furthermore, this is assuming that the processes of acquiring a GRC are effective in separating de-transitioners from other transitioners, which may not be case. In light of this, the possibility of de-transitioning is not a compelling reason for the GRA to remain as authoritarian as it is.

Significant harm is being done to trans people under the current GRA, and this harm would not be adequately reduced by HM government's proposed changes. There's no plan for reforming the process for requiring a Gender Recognition Certificate, so the process is still expensive, time consuming and demeaning. There are no meaningful reforms to medical practices, there's no commitment to funding these services properly, and there's no commitment to ending discriminatory legislation—especially in dogwhistling to “single sex spaces”. Instead, all fees concerning transitioning should be removed, the statutory declaration and spousal consent provision should both be abolished, and the age requirement should be lowered to 16.

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