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Statement of Esta Soler,
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**Leading Violence Prevention Group Condemns Texas Move to
Mis-Classify Medical Treatment for Transgender Youth as Child Abuse,
Calling It Hate-Mongering Disguised as Child Protection**

“For all of our 35-year history, Futures Without Violence has worked to stop violence against children and youth and to help all young people grow up safe and healthy. We know that transgender youth are among those most likely to suffer violence in their homes and communities and, as a result, they experience some of the highest rates of suicide. The horrible move by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and Attorney General Ken Paxton, to require the state’s child welfare agency to mis-classify and investigate medical treatment for transgender youth as child abuse, will put many already-vulnerable children and youth in harm’s way. It is unnecessary, it is appalling, and it will cause real harm.

Let’s be clear: Gender-affirming health care is not child abuse. Absolutely no one should alert a child welfare agency when a parent, health care provider, or other licensed professional offers support and care. Rather, inhibiting children from accessing necessary health care is, in fact, a form of severe neglect and will cause long-term harms to trans youth. We need communities with parents, teachers, mentors, coaches and health care providers who support young people, affirm their identities, and love them for exactly who they are. And we need child welfare agencies to use their precious resources to protect those suffering neglect, maltreatment or abuse.

What Gov. Abbott and Attorney General Paxton are doing will foster and foment hate. Futures Without Violence is the country’s largest national policy organization working to end violence against women, children, and youth. We support trans youth and denounce hate-mongering disguised as child protection. It must stop.”

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ABOUT FUTURES WITHOUT VIOLENCE:

For more than 35 years, FUTURES has been providing groundbreaking programs, policies and campaigns that empower individuals and organizations working to end violence against women and children around the world. Striving to reach new audiences and transform social norms, FUTURES trains professionals such as doctors, nurses, judges and athletic coaches on improving responses to violence and abuse. FUTURES also works with advocates, policymakers and others to build sustainable community leadership and educate people everywhere about the importance of respect and healthy relationships