

Letter 25

February 15, 2017

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2017 FEB 20 AM 8:17

Department of Employee Trust Funds
GIB Liaison
P.O. Box 7931
Madison, WI 53707-7931

To the Members of the Group Insurance Board –

This letter is to register my dismay at the recent reinstatement of transgender exclusions in your Wisconsin group health insurance plans. In my position as Faculty Director of the UW-Madison Letters & Science Honors Program and as a faculty member in the Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic at UW-Madison, I regularly interact with undergraduate and graduate students who are transgender. Many of these students – and many other Wisconsinites and Americans – are struggling with their experiences as transgender people in non-inclusive settings. While we do all we can as educators and mentors to support these students towards an education and a healthy, fulfilled life, I am appalled to know that important medical treatments that they require will not be covered. Being transgender is not a choice, and these students require medical help and support, not the added obstacle of your policy of excluding transgender patients from coverage ~~is~~.

I expect the state of Wisconsin aims to retain highly talented students after they graduate. This kind of discriminatory policy is counter-productive. Many of these individuals will leave the state of Wisconsin as soon as they finish their degrees, if not sooner. Repealing this exclusionary policy is the right thing to do for transgender people in Wisconsin and for the state's reputation and ability to retain talent.

I urge you in the strongest possible terms to rethink your decision to impose this deplorable policy.

Yours very truly,

