

Church body calls on politicians to 'renounce the sin' of promoting transgender procedures for minors

By [Jon Brown](#) | [Fox News](#)

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An influential [conservative Presbyterian denomination](#) recently agreed to formally petition government authorities against promoting transgender procedures for minors in a rare rebuke of government officials from the church.

The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), which held its 50th General Assembly in Memphis, Tennessee, last week, approved by a vote of 1,089-793 an overture to urge the government to "renounce the sin" of promoting irreversible [sex change procedures](#) for children. A commission to be appointed by the assembly's moderator will be tasked with drafting the petition.

The PCA is the denomination of the church affiliated with [the Covenant School in Nashville](#), Tennessee, where three adults and three children were gunned down in March at the hands of 28-year-old Audrey Hale, who identified as transgender. The initial overture, which was submitted by the Alabama-based Evangel Presbytery, was drafted before the massacre.

The overture cited multiple scientific studies that suggest such "medical and surgical interventions [are a rejection of science](#)" and that the epidemic 900% increase in gender dysphoria among girls during the past eight years is primarily "driven by social contagion from contemporary social, educational, and cultural influences."

The overture also argues that God created human beings male and female, that cross-dressing is immoral and that [Jesus Christ warned strongly](#) against scandalizing children.

The Rev. Bryan Chapell, the stated clerk of the PCA, told Fox News Digital in March that the push for transgender procedures appears to be a political agenda that is backed by neither science nor the Bible.

"I think all churches are dealing with these issues, as we well know, because of the cultural push at this time to congratulate people who [question their sexual identity](#)," Chapell said. "All young people are certainly being subjected to that cultural push, but it in our view does not cohere with either science or Scripture."

The Rev. Fred Greco, who served as moderator of the PCA's 50th General Assembly, said he is not aware of anyone in the denomination who supports transgenderism in any capacity, but he noted that the debate on the overture hinged on to what extent the church should involve itself in state affairs.

According to the Westminster Confession of Faith that forms the basis of Presbyterianism, churches should only petition civil authorities in "cases extraordinary," which proponents of the overture argue applies to the government promoting irreversible sex change procedures for minors. The denomination, which came together in the early 1970s, has [similarly petitioned with regard to abortion](#) and the right to life, Greco said.

"We have governmental officials saying not only do we have to press [children] to make these decisions, we have to allow them to do so without even the input of their parents," Greco said. "That's very, very dangerous."

"I think that's what has gotten so many people concerned about it, and I think that also makes it rise to the level of a 'case extraordinary' – that it's not just a bad moral decision, it's something where the government is [interfering with the rights of parents](#) and allowing this to happen in an irreversible fashion," he added.

Greco said the PCA decided to "cut the Gordian knot" amid squabbles over the wording of the overture by agreeing to appoint a commission that will draft the final text of the motion that will be forwarded to both federal and state authorities.

Greco said he was tasked with picking the members of the commission, which he said will take place in the coming weeks and will include multiple medical professionals. He noted that the final text of the petition will be "about two pages" and not wade into issues such as [biological men in women's sports](#).

"The issue would be solely about medical procedures and drugs that are involved with transitioning, especially with respect to minors," he said. "Because the idea there, obviously, is we don't speak to everything that people do when they're adults."

Greco also noted that the PCA has congregations in Canada, where he said the issue is even more pressing for Christians. Last year, the [Canadian Parliament passed Bill C-4](#), which makes counseling that does not affirm homosexuality or transgender identity a crime punishable by up to five years in prison. The scope of the law prompted protests from thousands of churches of various denominations throughout North America.

Explaining how the [PCA General Assembly](#) did not formally approve a petition to the Canadian government, Greco said he is "looking for a mechanism so that it can get in front of the Canadian government without violating our polity."

"Our Canadian brothers have expressed some concern about how they can be involved and have their government a copy of this as well," he said.

The PCA formed in 1973 when 260 congregations primarily from Mississippi, Alabama and South Carolina broke off from the mainline Presbyterian church in the U.S. in response to what they saw as encroaching theological liberalism. The PCA has since grown to include more than 375,000 members and more than 1,540 churches, [according to its website](#).

The liberal Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA), by contrast, has come out [in support of transgender procedures](#) for minors, petitioning Democrat Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear in March to veto a bill that would ban such procedures in the state.