

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS  
CENTRAL DIVISION**

**DYLAN BRANDT, et al.,**

**PLAINTIFFS,**

**v.**

**No. 4:21-CV-00450-JM**

**LESLIE RUTLEDGE, et al.,**

**DEFENDANTS.**

**DECLARATION OF CLIFTON FRANCIS BURLEIGH, JR.**

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 1746, I declare:

1. My name is Clifton Francis Burleigh, Jr., although most people know me as “Billy.” I have personal knowledge of the statements contained in this declaration.

2. When I was a young man, I transitioned from presenting as a male to presenting as a female. I began the process medically, through cross-sex hormone therapy, and progressed to surgery. I experienced no mental health benefits from my gender transition procedures. After presenting myself as a woman for seven years, I detransitioned and resumed presenting myself as a man.

3. As a young boy in the first grade I began having the recurring thought that “God made a mistake. I am a girl.” I would pray before going to bed, “God, please make me a girl before I wake up.” I tried to push the thought that I was a girl out of my mind, but the thought was consistent and persistent throughout childhood and into my college years.

4. Around the time I finished my undergraduate studies, I sought help from a gender therapist for the disconnect between my mind telling me I was a woman and my body telling me I was a man. I received therapy nearly every week from her for an hour at a time. I also researched transgenderism, reading books and journal articles on what it was and what caused it.

Although I wanted to remain a man and be free of the thought that I was a woman, the message I



received was that the only way to overcome the disconnect was to change my body to conform to what my mind was telling me.

5. After five to six years of gender therapy, depression began to set in. I was not suicidal, but suicide was coming to seem like more of an option for me. I was willing to try anything, so I told my therapist that I wanted to transition. She told me that she was glad that I had finally made that decision, and she gave me a note to take to a doctor to start hormone therapy.

6. I began taking a testosterone blocker and estrogen. My emotions were up and down, and my body was changing. But it made me feel happy that I was supposedly on a new road to happiness.

7. The next step was surgery, but I needed two letters to begin male-to-female surgeries, so I began seeing a second therapist. About three years after beginning hormone therapy, I had my first surgery—a penile inversion, an Adam’s apple shave, and a brow shave. Afterwards, the doctor and nurses had difficulty stopping the bleeding from my new “vagina.” They packed my artificial vagina with gauze and put a sandbag on my lower abdomen in an effort to stop the bleeding. But it would not stop, and I had to be administered a blood transfusion and plasma. My mother told me later that going into my hospital room was awful. The odor in the room was like that of an overly saturated tampon. I was discharged only after spending three weeks in the hospital. But changing my penis to an artificial vagina required two surgeries. So only four months after my first surgery I went back for the second one.

8. I had more feminization surgeries in addition to these first two. I jumped through all the hoops and did everything I was supposed to do to change my presentation from male to female. But no matter how many surgeries I had, every time I looked in the mirror I saw a man staring back at me. They were never enough to make my mind and body connect.

9. Seven years after transitioning to presenting as female, I had more problems than before I had begun. Changing my body did not resolve my internal conflict and it did not make me happy. But it had left me with a scarred body, and it drained my financial resources. Depression began to set back in and suicide was again coming to seem like more of an option.

10. By about 38 years old, I had endured many surgeries and tried many lifestyle changes, but they had not helped me. I began the process of detransitioning, which took about 2 to 3 years. I changed my name and all my documents and returned to being, identifying, and presenting as male.

11. I am now 54 years old. My thoughts are clear and I am free of the mental turmoil I had as a kid and growing up. I am happily married. I have two beautiful stepdaughters. I have peace of mind.

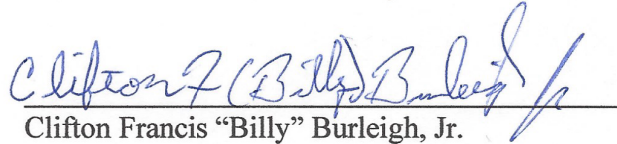
12. With the benefit of age and experience, I recognize that the healthcare I received failed me in several areas. First, no mental health professional counseled me that everyone has a continuing need for acceptance, significance, and security. As a child I thought that, by being a girl, my psychological needs would be fulfilled. But that was wrong. Second, the mental health professionals simply assumed that the only way I could be mentally healthy was to pursue the thought that I should have been, and therefore was, a girl and woman. But that was also wrong. The many medical and surgical procedures they provided for me left me worse off than when I began. Third, I had a number of childhood issues that the mental health professionals failed to uncover and adequately address. Had those issues, including a speech impediment, a learning disability, and childhood sexual abuse, been properly dealt with, I might not have had to go down the expensive and painful road I've traveled.

13. I have great compassion for children and teenagers who struggle with gender dysphoria today. They look to their parents and health care professionals to help them. Even as an adult, I relied on the mental health counseling I received in deciding to pursue gender transition. My decision to begin hormone therapy and surgery was prompted by it. But in my experience, the mental health profession is so quick to “affirm” what is perceived to be a transgender identity that a gender transition is presented as the only real solution for those struggling with gender dysphoria. The doctors and surgeons then simply provide the requested hormones and surgeries.

14. My mental health professionals led me to make a horrible mistake. They were wrong about the right course of action for me as a mature, responsible adult with years of therapy. My experience has led me to question whether mental health professionals can confidently make the right recommendations for still-developing children and teenagers with gender dysphoria.

**I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.**

**Executed on June 21, 2021.**

  
Clifton Francis “Billy” Burleigh, Jr.