

Chair Blessing III, Vice Chair Reineke, ranking minority member Clyde, and the members of the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee," I, Tamaya Dennard, City of Cincinnati Councilwoman, support the legislation, H.B. 160, being considered.

As a country, we just celebrated the birthday of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. a few weeks ago. Dr. King was a master of powerful quotes and incredible action. One of my favorite quotes of his is, "the time is always right to do what is right." This quote is very fitting for what needs to happen with H.B. 160. Making it illegal to discriminate against people based on sexual orientation and gender identity is the right thing to do, and the time is now to make it happen.

It is always our hope that people will do the right thing on their own. But when they can't or when they are unwilling, it's government's job to step in. I am a black woman who experienced poverty growing up in Cincinnati. Because government intervened to make the playing field more level through legislation, I became the first person in my family to graduate from college and I am the newest member of Cincinnati City Council.

Beyond appealing to your moral conscience, I want to appeal to the fiscal steward in you. Banning discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity is good for our bottom line. The Center for American Progress estimates that workplace discrimination costs our country \$64 billion every year.

Right now, one out of every ten people who identify as LGBTQ have left a job due to being made to feel unwelcome because of sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

This is a common sense law that costs little, if anything to implement, and it could make all the difference in the world to someone suffering from discrimination. Sexual orientation is not a choice, it's how a person is born and any discrimination against who a person is or who they choose to love is flat out wrong.

I take an incredible amount of pride in being an Ohioan, born and raised. My big city friends from either coasts tease me about being from the Midwest. They automatically call us last adopters on just about anything. This is yet another opportunity to prove they couldn't be more wrong about the Buckeye State. The evidence supports that this is the right decision for Ohio to make and now is the right time to make it. Nearly 75% of

Ohioans favor employment and housing laws that make it illegal to discriminate based on sexual orientation or gender identity. 20 cities in Ohio already offer these protections, including the City of Cincinnati.

I answer to fairness, equality, equity, and to an Ohio that seeks to right the wrongs of the past. I serve a God who loves all, no matter your race, gender, sexual orientation, or political affiliation. I serve a God of no condemnation.

I'd like to thank the committee for their time and consideration.