

Chair Hambley, Vice Chair Patton, Ranking Member Brown, and the members of the House Civil Justice Committee, my name is Hannah Lehmann, and I am submitting this testimony in support of House Bill 369, the Ohio Fairness Act.

I care about my friends, family, and coworkers who identify as LGBTQ+. They should not have to live in fear that they may be discriminated against by employers for who they are and who they love. Everyone deserves the right to attain the jobs they want and are qualified for, and to deny someone that right is simply un-American. Ohio's children are being denied their right to dignified work for reasons that are based in pure fiction. For example, many people still hold the belief that allowing transgender people to use the bathroom of their choice would allow for more instances of sexual assault in the workplace. However, over 250 cities in America, including over two dozen localities in Ohio, have already passed similar laws with no increase in public safety incidents. Ohio should not be ruled by unfounded fears, and now is the time to listen to not just our hearts, but common sense.

Discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community touches all of our lives in one way or another. Our workplaces are losing the diversity the need to thrive and be successful. Ohio's laws are behind compared to other states, and in order for our businesses to be competitive, we need to be hiring based on ability, and not let discrimination poison our workforce. Almost three quarters of Ohioans agree that it should be illegal to discriminate based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The cost of workplace discrimination is \$64 billion annually, so this bill would undeniably help the economy. If you truly care about Ohio communities and businesses, there is no reason this bill shouldn't pass.

I urge you to pass House Bill 369, the Ohio Fairness Act. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Hannah Lehmann