

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

In high school, I was bullied for being gay. I was outed in gym class and it was the most horrible experience I have ever felt. I was helpless, scared, and couldn't understand why I was being targeted for who I am. I had no one to turn to for help. And I had no one to look up to.

Today, I own an Italian specialty deli and bakery, and contribute to my community. My husband and I got married in Canada, and we have fought for our rights and continue to advocate for the younger generation.

I urge you to pass House Bill 369, the Ohio Fairness Act.

Thank you for your time and consideration.