

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

I am like the nearly three quarters of Ohioans who favor employment and housing laws that make it illegal to discriminate based on sexual orientation or gender identity. As a queer person in Ohio the Ohio Fairness Act would protect me from discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodation. LGBTQ+ people shouldn't have to live in fear that they will be discriminated against based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. For employers to feel comfortable recruiting the best talent here to Ohio we need inclusive nondiscrimination laws. I deserve the right to feel safe in my workplace knowing that I am being judged on the merit of my work and not on who I love.

This legislation would reduce the estimated \$64 billion cost of workplaces discrimination estimated by the Center for American Progress. This is the annual cost for businesses to replace more than 2 million Americans who leave their jobs because of workplace discrimination. There is also a reluctance for top corporations to locate their business here or move talented executives here without laws that would ensure their employees happiness.

The Ohio Fairness Act would allow me and many of my friends to feel safe starting our professional lives in Ohio. My sexual orientation shouldn't affect my work or allow me to be discriminated against in any context. I deserve the same protections as non-LGBTQ+ people and the Ohio Fairness Act would allow me to have that security.

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

McKenzie Fleischer