

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

Discrimination is an act of humiliation through the judgment of a stranger's personal concepts. It's a hurtful act that hatefully intends to separate. In this case, individuals are being deprived of, suppressed from acquiring basic needs to survive.

I can't get rightful employment that I qualify for. Or a home that I desire because of who I am. Because one doesn't accept what they see. These are strangers now. Strangers who do not know of my heart, my work ethic, or of my personal importance and value. That hurts and this type of treatment violates my personal rights and goes against the spirit of The Civil Rights Act of 1964, which ended segregation in public places and banned employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin and is considered one of the crowning legislative achievements of the Civil Rights Movement.

As a mother of a wonderful gay son with a wonderful partner (both accomplished men) it would be unnatural for me not to fight for the rights of my children as if going to war against an attacker who snatched the clothes of my young child's back, hatefully taking away his basic needs, his human rights to exist comfortably. The LGBTQ community has fought for their Civil Rights for decades now, and it is a shame that in this new era of technological advancement, that they are still fighting for human rights that should have been established in the 60s.

We are fighting for the rights of our dear children, our parents and close siblings, cousins, respected aunts, uncles, best friends, strangers alike. For future generations to be treated fairly, so that they can carry their personal dignity without being shamed. Is that really too much to ask?

Please vote yes on House Bill 369, the Ohio Fairness Act.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Melissa Cartier