

January 25, 2018

Chair Blessing III, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Minority Member Clyde, and the members of the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee, my name is David T. Abbott and I am submitting this testimony in support of House Bill 160.

The passage of House Bill 160 and, with it, the guarantee to all LGBTQ Ohioans of fairness and inclusion in employment, housing, and public accommodations is essential to the future success of Ohio.

This is an issue of simple justice. In order to fully achieve the society we want – in both reality and reputation – passage of laws such as the one being considered today is a necessity. The Ohio Fairness Act is a forward-looking, smart solution to address a problem that should have been addressed many years ago – discrimination against our LGBTQ community members. Ohio ought to join the growing list of states that are adopting statewide non-discrimination protections for LGBTQ citizens across the country.

This is also an economic issue. Ohio is in global competition for talent to fuel our economic future. Although I am submitting this testimony as an individual, but I am acutely aware of the talent needs of Ohio business through my work at The George Gund Foundation, the Fund for Our Economic Future and TeamNEO. In addition to growing, educating, and training hardworking Ohioans, we must also throw wide our doors of welcome to talented people across the country who are seeking a place to work hard, put down roots, and contribute to civic life. It is evident that talented young people are disproportionately attracted to vibrant, diverse, open-minded places. Passing House Bill 160 will be another step toward making Ohio the stronger talent magnet we all need it to be.

I urge you to pass the Ohio Fairness Act this session.

Thank you.



David T. Abbott

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: ~~January 25, 2018~~ January 31, 2018

Name: David T. Abbott

Are you representing: Yourself Organization _____

Organization (If Applicable): _____

Position/Title: _____

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Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes _____ No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB 160

Specific Issue: _____

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent _____ Interested Party _____

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No _____

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? none

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

See attached written testimony.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.