

Chair Bacon, Vice Chair Dolan, Ranking Minority Member Thomas, and the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, my name is Cynthia Vermillion and I oppose House Bill 36.

I have been a member of a conservative Christian church since I converted at age 14. At no time have I ever known any church leader to be forced to perform a marriage for anyone at any time. Our faith leaders are fully protected by the constitution of the United States and do not need further protections.

On the other hand, I see this bill includes the right for religious entities to discriminate against anyone at any time with regard to the rental of a church-owned facility normally rented out to the public. So, with this bill we are bringing back discrimination against the citizens of Ohio? It is unconscionable that our state leaders wish to take us back to pre-1960s and sanction prejudice and discrimination. A religious organization could claim that only white people of European descent can rent their facilities. Seriously?

I can only shake my head in disbelief and despair when I see how far our state political leaders are taking Ohio in the path of digression and barbarism.

Please vote no on this unnecessary and very harmful bill. Thank you.