

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

I am a small business owner in Columbus, and in my business, I design and perform custom wedding ceremonies. I also coach people through the difficulty of finding employment. This work has given me a great amount of insight into just how hard it is for many LGBTQ people to find a job in Ohio.

As a storyteller, I am happy to interview someone who is shy about speaking, then share. I am a writer and experienced speaker. I am eager to be a voice.

I have witnessed the heartbreak of seeing my fellow human beings excluded from the right to live their lives to the fullest expression. This legislation is right and needed. As a Jew, as an Ohioan, as a former journalist, and as a person living in a country where we are supposedly blessed with opportunity, I am ashamed to believe that we are not yet protecting each other. Let Ohio be a leader and show the nation that we care about all our citizens.

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

Thank you for your time and consideration.