



Mission:

EYEJ drives social justice reform by empowering young people to advocate for change.

Vision:

An equitable and inclusive world.

December 1st, 2020
Sub. H. B. No. 13 Opponent Hearing

Members of the Energy and Public Utilities Committee,

Hello, my name is Tréyah Gray. I am 18 years old and I go to John Hay High School. I'm part of the EYEJ Youth Council and today I'm going to be talking about domestic violence and how it plays into the Digital Divide.

When the Digital Divide first began I started to worry about my brother and sister. With the knowledge that domestic abuse has gone up since the COVID, you should connect that the Digital Divide is a trigger. Children are specifically vulnerable to abuse during COVID-19. Research shows that increased stress levels among parents are often a major predictor of physical abuse and neglect of children. My sister doesn't have any internet at her mom's house so when her grades drop her dad becomes abusive even with the knowledge that she just doesn't have the resources to be able to do her work. My little brother is exposed to this same domestic violence as well and often gets in trouble over little things. Now that he has to be home for longer it's a greater chance he will encounter domestic abuse. Especially with the struggles of online schooling. The support systems that many at-risk parents rely on, such as extended family, child care and schools, religious groups, and other community organizations, are no longer available in many areas due to the stay-at-home orders. So, my question to the government is how are we going to

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solve a potential trigger to lessen the likelihood of domestic violence within the household?

The HB13 Bill doesn't do this, thus the reason I am against it. Like most bills made the HB13 bill was made to better accommodate the enemy. Why are we allowing a former Time Warner cable worker and now a charter for Spectrum to make provisions to this bill? He is making it harder for Ohioans to access high-quality broadband by specifically excluding publicly owned networks and cooperative utilities from participating. With the knowledge that families we wish to provide free internet for can't afford wifi and most likely won't ever be able to, the companies and corporations are not losing potential money or money in general. We must stop the systematic failures before they start and create bills that help people and are FOR the people not belittle them and take away their rights.

To go on The HB13 Bill is definitely a step towards breaking the digital divide, but not the answer. Specifically, this bill will have no effect on the abolishment of the digital divide in Cleveland. The bill hits the most obvious problems but forgets to address the people left behind in the Digital Divide, which is the reasoning for the bill in the first place. More than half of Ohio's 624 cities were included in the worst digitally connected cities list. By giving people internet that is only reliable less than

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half of the time causes more problems than having none at all. For example, more stress, including not being able to work from home, turn in assignments, or go to class. If our internet is not reliable then we are presented as unreliable.

Our work in EYEJ's Youth Council has accomplished to get hot spots/internet for the youth in Cleveland, have a town hall meeting about the digital divide, and are creating awareness. The final question I have is why do we as civilians have to go out of our way to fix a problem that our authority, the government, should be fixing? The government NEEDS to compromise fairly between greedy money-making monopolies and THEIR citizens. For, they are responsible for BOTH.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tréyah Gray

EYEJ Youth Council Member

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