

Chair Eklund, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Minority Member Thomas, and the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, my name is Christy Hoekzema Banke and I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Bill 11, the Ohio Fairness Act.

I write this testimony in support of protecting all Ohio residents by including those who identify as LGBTQ as a protected class from workplace, housing and public accommodations discrimination.

I have lived in Cincinnati, Ohio all my life. I desire for my neighbors, friends, family and all Ohioans to be safe from discrimination that threatens them personally and their quality of life. All people deserve respect and to be safe from discrimination that limits their ability to have meaningful employment, housing and participation in the community. It is time for Ohio to have laws that achieve this equality.

It's time for Ohio to be a leader in protecting all our wonderful residents! Let's show the whole country why we are filled with bright and promising futures here in Ohio for all our residents- encouraging others to move here for school, jobs and recreation. And as a mom I am compelled to be a voice for all people to be respected and equally protected by our laws. I am only afraid of a state government that is too weak to represent all people equally - I am not afraid of a government that stands up for the LGBTQ Community. I stand with them.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Christy Hoekzema Banke