

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

I am on the executive boards of the Queer/Trans Student Union, the Queer Literature Club, and the Adolescent to Young Adult Association at Bowling Green State University. I represent queer and trans students, including future educators. We are all people who are soon going into the workforce and want the best for each other.

As a future educator, I fear that I will either not be hired or will be fired for belonging to the LGBTQ+ Community. I have many friends who share this fear. We can offer a lot to the education system and will not get that chance if we are discriminated against at every turn. Many students in school right now belong to the LGBTQ+ community, and if they see someone like me teaching, they'll feel more comfortable and better equipped to succeed.

As I have sought career advice from my academic mentors, I have been told by many professors that I should exclude my LGBTQ+ organizations from my resume. They have my best interest in mind, but I'd like to live in a world where my identity does not bar me from certain jobs. I would like to live as my full self in my work.

I urge you to pass Senate Bill 11, the Ohio Fairness Act.

Thank you for your time and consideration.