

Testimony in favor of HB 454
From Michael Cooper
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Madam Chairwoman and other Honorable Representatives of the Great State of Ohio. My name is Michael Cooper. I have lived most of my life in the Great State of Ohio.

My testimony is geared to personal experience and effects on families. I let the other testimony be geared to statistics.

I am the grandfather of a smart and beautiful 15 year old girl. She had moved from her Mother's home to live with her father. (very strange as she never wanted to go there on his visitation days). Three years ago just before her 13th birthday, I called her dad's house to ask about a birthday gift. On the phone her dad was calling her by a different name (this had not been brought up before) and saying "he can't come to the phone now" "I'll tell him you called" This of course, caught me by surprise, and didn't make sense to me. I wanted to talk to my GRANDDAUGHTER. This didn't make sense, and he wasn't going to explain anything since I was pressing him.

The next day my daughter, Jeannette called and told me I was not allowed to call my granddaughter. Her attorney had gone to family court and the judge signed an order prohibiting me from talking to her. It still doesn't make sense to me, and I have not spoken to her since.

I love my granddaughter as much as you can love anyone or anything. She's my only grandchild. It's been 3 years since I have talked to her. When she decided to be transgender nobody is allowed to talk to her if the male name is not used, even her own Mother. My daughter, Jeannette lost all custody and isn't allowed to talk with her. The family court has deemed we are "unsafe," and she might hurt herself?

I have let it be known I want to speak with her to try to understand where "She" went. If she wants to act like an adult, she needs to be conversive. It's very possible we can agree to disagree, but she is afraid to present herself to me.

I send her appropriate holiday gifts. One time I did receive a "thank you" note that stated we could resume a relationship if I recognized her as her chosen name.

I think there are a lot of adults who are encouraging her and that is very upsetting.

I miss my granddaughter, and I know my daughter does, as well. This "gender identity" stuff is hurting our entire family, but most of all it has to be hurting my granddaughter. She's missing out on time with her grandpa. She had a journal that had passages of favorite times and things to do. There are numerous mentions of games and times with me.

Counseling seems to be a favorite interjection. I know of an instance where the counselor not only started the child down this road, but continues to encourage and promote these so-called feelings.

I am likely the most senior individual in the room. I have been down the road and back, and around the block numerous times.

I lived during the "hippy" generation. As I walked to class and looked into the meadow in front of the Student Union it was filled with long hair and non-conforming clothing, as the smell of cannabis filled the air. This era was BIG.

It boomed ---and died.

I witnessed the Goth revolution of young people. It, too, passed.

Then came the Grunge evolution---it , too, went away.

These were FADS. They come about quickly, and then die.

Now we have a trans-sexual identity crisis. I'm not sure if the word transgender was in the dictionary when I was young. Even though there are some who have made sexual changes to their bodies over the years, the transgender idea has exploded. I believe it is due to the internet and social media. My granddaughter fell into this. She was a very sweet "all girl" girl.

Anything that explodes like this is a fad. It has no base, no building blocks. When I was 12 years old all I wanted was to play baseball and eat ice cream. We, as youngsters, were always active---internet be damned.

It will die down, not only because something else will replace it, but those who trans will discover issues and problems which will be exposed.

But, in the meantime, it cannot be ignored. Too many young people could be hurt. Parents and family are the answer. They need to participate in their child's life. They can't let the internet and social media dictate their children's learning.

Children need guidance and encouragement to be active. They don't need to pass them off to counselors. Be involved with them monitor their internet and social media usage. They shouldn't be left to their own devices. Help them help themselves.

I encourage the committee to move HB454 along to the full House for passage.

Demonstrate that Ohio is one of the leaders that will not allow mental professionals and medical physicians to alter and desecrate the minds and bodies of minor children. Let them grow up first.