

May 30, 2022

Chair Manchester, Vice Chair Cutrona, Ranking Member Denson, and members of the House Families, Aging and Human Services Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to provide written opponent testimony for House Bill 454.

My name is Susan Hyde and I am a resident of Grandview Heights, Ohio. I am testifying today as the parent of a transgender child. We went to the Thrive Clinic at Nationwide Children's Hospital a couple of months after my child had turned 16. I was not forced or coerced into doing anything, and nothing was done without my written permission. Parents have the right to say no to treatment, so this legislation is completely unnecessary. There was no "experimentation" going on with my child. All decisions were made with my involvement and consent.

The following is taken directly from The Trevor Project website:

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people aged 10 to 24 (Hedegaard, Curtin, & Warner, 2018) — and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth are at significantly increased risk.
- LGBTQ youth are more than four times as likely to attempt suicide than their peers (Johns et al., 2019; Johns et al., 2020).
- The Trevor Project estimates that more than 1.8 million LGBTQ youth (13-24) seriously consider suicide each year in the U.S. — and at least one attempts suicide every 45 seconds.
- The Trevor Project's 2022 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health found that 45% of LGBTQ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year, including more than half of transgender and nonbinary youth.

Rejection and a Lack of Social Support & Affirming Spaces

- Research suggests that among LGBTQ youth, only one-third experience parental acceptance, with an additional one-third experiencing parental rejection, and the final one-third not disclosing their LGBTQ identity until they are adults (Katz-Wise et al., 2015). Another study found that LGBTQ young adults who report high levels of parental rejection are eight times more likely to report attempting suicide and six times more likely to report high levels of depression (Ryan et al., 2009).
- Many LGBTQ youth lack access to affirming spaces, with only 55% of LGBTQ youth reporting that their school is LGBTQ-affirming and only 37% saying that their home is LGBTQ-affirming. Fewer than 1 in 3 transgender and nonbinary youth found their home to be gender-affirming and a little more than half (51%) found their school to be affirming. The Trevor Project's research consistently finds that LGBTQ young people report lower rates of attempting suicide when they have access to LGBTQ-affirming spaces."

Many adolescents look to trusted adults outside of their own homes. They should be able to confide in school personnel such as guidance counselors. Outing kids to their parents or guardians will do nothing but increase the risk of self harm or suicide.

This bill will cause a great deal of harm. Believe it or not, children have the capability of knowing WHO they are. Today, my child is 21 year old, thriving and the happiest they have been in their entire life. We have a wonderful, close relationship because I listened to them and believed them.

Please do not allow this unnecessary, reckless and dangerous legislation to go any further. Thank you again for allowing me to express my opposition to this bill.