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Susan Manchester, Chair
Ohio House Families, Aging and Human Services Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chairwoman Manchester, Vice Chair Cutrona, and Ranking Member Denson:

I am writing to you, in response to HB454, as a concerned citizen, a child advocate, and a professional in child psychology and special education with almost 20 years of experience supporting families and children across clinical and educational settings.

The Ohio General Assembly should leave the practice of medicine to licensed healthcare providers. I am deeply concerned that HB454 sets a dangerous precedent by ignoring science and interfering with medical decision making.

Furthermore, HB454 also sets a dangerous precedent by threatening a caregiver's autonomy to discuss healthcare options for their child(ren) in consultation with their child(ren)'s medical provider. When I work with families, I use data, what we know about evidence-based practices, and a family's wishes to develop individualized treatment plans for children. In my experience, every parent wants what is best for their child(ren). Parents do the best they can, often in difficult circumstances, to make decisions they believe are in their child(ren)'s best interest. **The Ohio General Assembly should not be making these decisions on behalf of parents.**

HB454 also would place my colleagues in an ethical dilemma. The forced choice a physician must make, under HB454, is to refrain from providing evidence-based care to patients struggling with gender dysphoria or lose their medical license. This bill is discriminatory; **I cannot imagine another diagnosis where a state law would prohibit physicians from delivering evidence-based care.**

In a time when the demand for child and adolescent mental health care is at its highest, HB454 makes the demand even higher. I address children's and parents' mental health every day. I was trained to be a critical consumer of research and how to analyze data and evidence. I also was trained to support families and treat the whole child. Ignoring the facts about what is gender dysphoria and what individuals with gender dysphoria and their families experience is negligent. **Ignoring a child's mental health and a diagnosis like gender dysphoria is irresponsible and unethical.**

I implore you to vote no on HB454.

Sincerely,



Jennifer R. Frey, Ph.D.