

May 23, 2022

Chairwoman Susan Manchester
Families, Aging, and Human Services Committee
Ohio House of Representatives

RE: Opponent to HB 454

Chairwoman Manchester, Vice Chair Cutrona, Ranking Member Liston and members of the committee:

Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony in opposition to HB 454.

My name is Katrina Callaghan and I am the extremely proud mother of two sons, one of whom is transgender. I was born and raised in Ohio. I am originally from the Trumbull County area and have lived in Franklin County since 2007. My entire family is from Ohio, as well as my spouse's family. Ohio is the "Heart of It All" when it comes to my family.

I am proud to be an Ohioan at my core, but I am more relieved to be living in Franklin County while raising a transgender child. Most parts of Franklin County feel inclusive and accepting, but unfortunately that cannot be said throughout the state of Ohio. Now that HB 454 has been introduced, I am truly terrified of the potential outcome if this bill is passed. My child has experienced nothing but affirmation and support in the 6 years since he came out as transgender. He has had a medical team of knowledgeable professionals to work with throughout these 6 years. He hears about the hate and inaccurate information being spread by hate groups such as the one that sponsors this bill but has yet to experience it personally. I would love to keep it that way. I strongly and whole heartedly oppose HB 454.

I recently had a conversation with my Irish Catholic mother-in-law. Feel free to insert the "Irish Catholic Stereotypes because in our case they are true. Although it took some time for my in-laws to understand what it means to be transgender, they have been 100% supportive in our parenting and with our child. During this conversation my mother-in-law informed me that she is absolutely sick over this bill. She also offered that if this bill passes, she and my father-in-law would be willing to pay our travel expenses and medical bills to continue care for our child in case we need to leave the state of Ohio to do so. Although this is a nice offer, I don't think anyone would agree that taking retirement money from my in laws makes any sense. We are fortunate to have their support, but many parents do not have this same level of support. Their transgender children will suffer without medical care.

If you find yourself confused about what it is like to parent a trans person or to be one, then maybe you should ask yourself if you should really be making healthcare decisions without having the knowledge to do so. This parenting journey is not one that I imagined, but it is our reality. I will continue to advocate for my child as well as on behalf of the other trans kiddos. Please vote no and oppose this bill.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions that I can answer.

Sincerely, from a very tired mother,

Katrina Callaghan

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