

November 14, 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 Denson and members of the committee:
Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony in opposition to HB 454.

My name is Becca Fredin. I'm the mom of a very active little toddler. His name is Peter and he's almost 2 years old. Being a mom is my favorite thing in the world. I still have my friends, my work, my hobbies – but Peter is the brightest spot in my life. He's actually why I'm writing today.

A couple months ago we noticed that Peter was getting respiratory infections a lot. He had to spend a few nights in the hospital. It was really scary seeing my baby struggle to breathe. We're lucky that his doctors have been wonderful – we have had long conversations about the risks and benefits of each of the treatments we've pursued, whether it's medicine, or something else.

At one point Peter needed a video scope, this little tube with a camera on it that went in his nose and down his throat. The doctor went through all the risks and benefits, and let me know that it would be uncomfortable for Peter but that they didn't want to sedate him because that could be dangerous. I stayed up thinking about it, talked to my husband about, and ultimately I decided it was the right call to have the scope done. I had to hold Peter down and he screamed the whole time, but thankfully we learned that there wasn't anything wrong with his nose or throat.

I'm telling you this story because it speaks to my right, as mom here in the United States of America, to decide what medical care is best for my child. Even when it's a really hard choice, I get to weigh the pros and cons and decide, because I know my baby better than anyone else.

When I learned about House Bill 454, I realized that this Bill was going to strip away my right to make these tough decisions for my child.

You might say, "But Peter's only 2 years old, he doesn't need gender care!" – and you're right, he doesn't. But he does need other medical care, and I don't believe for a single second that this attack on medical consent will stop with gender-related care.

The gender care that the Bill is trying to ban is recommended by all the doctors and scientists—it's approved by the pediatricians, by endocrinologists. If the government is willing to take this away, what other decisions will they take away from parents? Will the government take away my right to decide Peter's asthma care too? Is the government going to start trying to parent my baby, because they think they know better than I do?

This is a slippery slope and I am **so** scared of Big Government taking away more rights. I'm concerned that instead of Peter's health being a conversation between me and Peter's doctor, that it will become a conversation between his doctor and Big Government.

The message I hear in this Bill is that the government does not trust me, the mom, to know what is in the best interest of my child.

I thank you for taking the time to read my testimony and I urge you to vote No on this Bill.

Sincerely,

Becca Fredin