

Kate Kolton

Chair Manchester, Vice Chair Cutrona, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the House Families, Aging, and Human Services Committee, thank you for this opportunity to voice my opposition to House Bill 454. This dangerous legislation is the opposite of safe and targets an already vulnerable group of Ohio youth by denying them access to life saving affirming medical care and revoking funding to hospitals who provide it. This bill would also threaten the safety of students in schools by forcing school guidance counselors and staff to abide by new rules that would be in direct conflict with the ethical guidance of their fields as well as title IV.

I'm a lifelong Ohio resident and a partner of a wonderful trans man and I can say with 100% certainty these laws hurt the community deeply. I've been with my partner for multiple years and I can't describe how painful it is for me to see this hate and complete misunderstanding of trans lives affect the people I love. Without the option to medically transition I don't believe many of my trans loved ones would still be here today. It is absurd to deny this harmless community of people their basic medical needs. I am truly disgusted by the actions being taken to limit our communities rights. Trans individuals have an exponentially higher rate of suicide than the majority of the population and it will rise if we add to their pain. If this legislation is allowed to pass lives WILL be lost and those who allow it will have blood on their hands.

I urge you to oppose HB 454 and protect our state's youth.