

Mathew Plauny

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.

My name is Matt. I am a counselor and therapist in the state of Ohio, and I am gender and sexuality informed. I focus a lot of my practice on the support and treatment of our transgender community, and that includes clients under the age of 18. I am strongly opposed to House Bill 454, preventing transgender youth from receiving proper medical care. As a queer person, I was inspired to find a career that would allow me to help others along their journal of self-discovery and acceptance. Often members of the LGBT community, especially transgender folks, experience high rates of mental health distress, including suicidal ideations. I've had the pleasure of working with really wonderful young, trans people who have utilized gender affirming care to treat gender dysphoria in children and adolescents, including the medical treatments that would be affected by this bill. I've witnessed first-hand accounts of these treatments saving lives. The implementation of this bill would be detrimental to the health and safety of many transgender youth. There are so many professionals in the medical and mental health fields that act as gatekeepers to assist families and young trans people in exploring the impacts and risks of these treatments. Don't eliminate their freedom to choose how to handle their gender affirming care and experience excellent outcomes. I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this harmful and dangerous bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

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