

Laura Perez

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.

As both a parent and a licensed social worker, taking individual choice from children and their families from making the appropriate medical choices with medical professionals is a negative and disheartening overreach of power. Helping minors match their physical bodies to their sense of person is a matter for families and medical professionals, not the general public or lawmakers in the capital to decide. Research shows transgender children have a much higher mental health risk for tragedy such as self harm and suicide. One thing that can help alleviate that is presenting as the gender they feel they are, regardless of their genitals or sex typed genetics. Especially for pubescent people, the dysmorphia of having a body presenting as a gender you aren't can be mitigated by using medication under a doctor's care that will delay or prevent secondary sex presentation that does not affirm their sense of self.

I urge you to leave these choices in the hands of Ohio families and the doctors they choose for their children. Please vote no on HB 454.