

**Giovanni Montavon**

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.

I am 43 years old and I have suffered from depression and anxiety my whole life. I have abused drugs just to make the pain cease. I came out as transgender almost 2 years ago and I have never felt more alive! I no longer have any desire to use drugs and my anxiety/depression has improved drastically. I am finally becoming a productive member of society and I am involved in my community as well. None of this progress would have been possible without my hormone replacement therapy and my upcoming surgeries. I urge you to NOT support this bill. Denying myself and others the proper medical treatment will only cause further harm due to substance abuse and suicide rates because of the major depression and anxiety that gender dysphoria causes. Please let me live...free and happy. Let other citizens receive the NECESSARY medical treatment that will help them continue to stay healthy mentally and emotionally.

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