

Clark Ausloos

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 a therapist, I have had the sincere honor of walking with trans and gender-expansive clients through some really tough times. But more often than not, I am humbled and in awe of the resilient spirits of my clients, especially when given access to life-saving medical treatments that affirm their gender. I have seen gender affirming care change the lives of my clients. Clients suicidality and depression often decrease. There are numerous peer-reviewed journals that demonstrate the efficacy of care; and outcomes for trans youth. Please **DO NOT** pass this bill.

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