

## **Amy Sveda**

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 a married mother of three beautiful children ages 13, 11 and 9. My husband is a business development/sales executive; I am the President of a digitally native online retailer. We both came from relatively healthy, nuclear families of four. My husband's father was a surgeon, his mother a dental hygienist. My parents were raised more blue collar. My father served in the navy and was a foreman for Ford for decades. My mother a secretary/clerical worker. My husband and I both went to Ohio State for college and have worked for varying organizations. I have worked for a multitude of corporate retailers including Victoria's Secret and Abercrombie both based in Ohio in addition to Louis Vuitton, Carters, Anthropologie - across various states. In 2018, our oldest, born biologically female, started puberty early. While we had witnessed some distress earlier on in their academic career (gifted but struggled with ADHD), it was nowhere on our radar that gender dysphoria could be an issue. It is now 2022, and we have been on quite a journey. They came out to us as transgender in 2018 in the 5th grade. We of course were 10000% percent supportive knowing the distress and high rate of suicide in this community. We spent countless hours, days, weeks, months, years ensuring we were identifying and providing the best level of support possible across Philadelphia (where we were residing at the time of them coming out) and in Columbus (New Albany) where we live currently. Consulting with CHOP, the gender clinic of Philadelphia, the Rodgers Institute (outpatient for anxiety/OCD), Nationwide...plus a portfolio of other OT, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Social Workers, parent and peer support groups, etc. over the years. We, again, have learned a great deal and have been in full support of our child. They are coming into their own and have an even better level of understanding as to who they are and how they fit into society as their authentic self. It absolutely disgusts me to see politicians who have zero personal ties to anyone in this community impress their limited points of view onto this marginalized group of individuals and onto their families that love and support them and are looking to do the very best by them. Until one has lived through this in their own family unit, they have NO IDEA what it all means and BY NO MEANS any wherewithal and credibility to be making determinations or law S it relates to any of us. I am beyond willing and able to advocate for my child and my family and others on a similar life journey. I would lay down my life to protect any of my children. Each one unique and talented and beautiful and loving and caring and a wonderful contributor to our community.