

My name is Amanda and I am a resident of the state of Ohio. I am representing myself and I am writing this testimony in opposition to House Bill 6.

This bill, which would effectively ban the inclusion of transgender athletes in school sports, has no place becoming a law in our state. It promotes discrimination and sends the message that transgender children and teens do not belong. Banning trans athletes from participating in school sports directly violates Title IX of the 14th Amendment. Trans kids have the right to participate in sports like any other kid, denying them this is not only cruel, but a violation of their basic human rights. The argument that trans athletes have an unfair advantage over other athletes is unfounded and unsupported by evidence. The reality is that trans athletes face many challenges and obstacles, including discrimination and harassment, and should be given the same opportunities as their peers. Furthermore, it is important to note that the anti-trans rhetoric has escalated in recent years, with some sitting politicians across the nation advocating for what is effectively the eradication of transgender persons. It is disheartening to say that my younger trans peers are legitimately terrified for their futures as citizens this nation, so it is in my best interest to take these fears seriously, and exercise my rights in order to oppose these kinds of bills publicly through written testimony.

As a transgender young adult, I have a lot of perspective which comes from lived experience. I came out to everyone in my life as transgender when I was 16 years old. I am privileged to say that I have a family, a support network, who has laughed and cried with me through every step because that's what matters. It may hurt to become, but there's such an undeniable, childlike joy and prosperity that comes with existing in a supportive environment as a young trans person. The hate these kinds of bills and laws promote stifle that joy, along with all hope for a prosperous future for transgender children and teens in this state.

This body isn't stopping with sports bans. Next it'll be bathroom bans and book bans. Then it'll be taking healthcare from trans kids and eventually transgender adults. All of these things have already happened in other states. Unless you, the representatives of the people of Ohio, oppose these kinds of bills, they will continue be put before this body, each more extreme than the last. I believe this body must be cautious about these anti-trans bills, if the wellbeing of all people in this state is truly the priority of this legislature.

House bill 6 and any other anti-trans legislation is the last thing this state needs. Hate has no place in our schools. Oppose this bill at all costs.

Thank you for your time.