

# Find Your Way Counseling & Consulting LLC

10945 Reed Hartman Hwy, Suite 313

Blue Ash, OH 45242

Date: 4/17/23

RE: HB6

To: House Committee Higher Education, Chair.Rep. Tom Young

My name is Jennifer Palmer and I am a full-time private practice therapist at Find Your Way Consulting and Consulting. I have a Master's Degree in Social Work from Binghamton University and am independently licensed with supervisory designation in the state of Ohio. I am an Ohio resident. Throughout my career as a therapist, I have worked as a home and community-based therapist, a school based therapist, and in private practice. I have been working as a mental health therapist in the state of Ohio since 2010.

I am writing this testimony in opposition of HB6. As a licensed social worker who has worked directly with the transgender and gender non-conforming population, I have experience in understanding Gender Dysphoria, co-morbid mental health diagnoses, and helping the clients I work with be well adjusted, happy, safe, and healthy. It is my belief that transgender individuals should have equal access to the benefits of participating in sports the same as their cisgender peers. Some of these benefits include improved self-esteem, increased self-confidence, improved academics, improved relationships with peers, and building life skills. Discriminatory and exclusive policies have harmful implications to transgender individuals, such as higher rates of anxiety and depression, low self-esteem, and school absences. Transgender girls and women are a small part of the population with varying degrees of physical ability. It is my belief that they pose no threat to cisgender females.

I implore you to reject HB6 and any legislation that would ban transgender athletes from participating in school sports. Banning transgender female athletes from participating in sports is another form of discrimination and mistreatment towards transgender individuals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J A Palmer', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jennifer A Palmer, LISW-S

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