

Opponent Testimony on HB 183
G. Marie
October 9, 2023

Chairman Young, Vice-Chair Manning, Ranking Member Miller, and Members of the Higher Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to HB 183, a bill that would ban transgender youth from using the correct restroom.

My name is G. Marie, and I have lived in Ohio for over 30 years. I am a wife, teacher, Christian, and the proud parent of a cis gender son and transgender daughter. I am also the mother of a cis gender daughter who died by suicide two years ago. I live in Representative Lear's district, and am appalled and disgusted that she has put forth this hateful, harmful legislation.

I have personally seen the struggle my transgender daughter has been through over the years. Seeing her relief at being able to use the women's restroom, knowing she is safer where she belongs, has meant we do not have to plan outings around the bathroom! Having been with her on several occasions when we have needed to use a public restroom, we have never had anyone question her right to be there. Being able to use the bathroom in public places is something all of us have to do, and keeping transgender kids and adults from using the bathroom will only increase their struggles with mental health. In fact, studies have shown that even putting forth hateful legislation like this increases the risk of suicide for transgender individuals. Knowing this, as well as knowing the devastation of losing a child to suicide, I am very aware of the serious risks this committee is taking with the lives of trans youth and adults.

My adult transgender daughter is a cancer survivor, and her amazing oncologist is at the OSU Hospitals. If this bill passes, since OSU is a teaching hospital and part of the University, would this mean she, too, will no longer be able to use the women's restroom? Will her updated birth certificate be viewed as invalid since it is not her original birth certificate? How in the world will this bill be implemented and enforced? Will my female friend with short hair who looks somewhat masculine be stopped at the door, people demanding to see her genitalia? Will everyone have to start carrying birth certificates?

Thinking about the pain my family continues to experience as the result of losing a child to suicide, I know far too well the likelihood of trans youth considering ending their lives should this bill pass into law. Politicians should not be the ones deciding who gets to use which restroom. A Harvard study shows that transgender youth with restricted access to the facilities that match their gender have a heightened risk of sexual violence. Isn't that what this bill is trying to avoid? Time and time again, misinformation and propaganda have created the false impression that transgender girls are committing crimes when it is actually cisgender males who perpetrate violence most frequently. This bill will not change that.

I respectfully request that you consider my testimony as the parent of a daughter lost to suicide, as well as the parent of a transgender daughter, and vote NO on HB183. Thank you for your time and consideration.