

Opponent Testimony for HB183
House Higher Education Committee
October 11, 2023
Written-Only Testimony

Rose Page, Public Library Worker

Chair Young, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Miller, and members of the Higher Education Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to add my voice to those testifying today. My name is Rose Page, and I am a public library worker from Cincinnati. I am writing today to express extreme concern regarding the proposed bill, HB183, and to urge you to oppose it.

I am a cisgender woman. I am “biologically female,” to use the language of the bill, and live my life as a woman. I also have the great fortune to know and love multiple transgender people, including my best friend, a trans man, and my girlfriend, a trans woman. According to the language of this bill, they would be required to use the “female” and “male” restrooms, respectively.

My best friend, the trans man, has been taking testosterone for years and has a full beard; he more often than not passes as (or is perceived as) a cisgender man. He also presently works at the Ohio State University. Under this proposed bill, he would be required to use the women’s restroom at his place of work. I can say with absolute certainty that I would fear for his safety if that were the case.

There is precedent for this fear. Here in Ohio, just three months ago, a trans man was attacked for using the women’s restroom, which he was advised to do by the owner of the campground where the bathroom was located. This incident reflects what is often the result of these policies, whether it is their intent or not: transgender children and adults, both men and women, are put into danger.

I am not here to quote statistics and facts — others can do so with more expertise and knowledge than I can, and I hope you will listen to them as well. I am here to say that I am terrified about the future of Ohio, the state I was born and raised in, the state my friend and girlfriend were born and raised in. When the House debated and passed a bill restricting access to gender-affirming care for youth, I feared for Ohio’s transgender kids, and I worried this bill and others would set a precedent for legislation directly affecting

those I love. The introduction of this bill proves my concerns to be well-founded, as this is exactly what has happened.

Ohio is my home. I want to love my home. I want to feel safe in my home. As it stands now, and as much of Ohio's proposed legislation trends, I don't know if I can even stay in my home if I want those I love to feel (and more importantly, be) safe too.

I ask you to consider my testimony, and consider that my story reflects the similar stories of many, many more people across this state and nation. I ask you to vote no on this bill, on behalf of the ones I love, and on behalf of all like them across the state.

Thank you for your time.