

Higher Education Committee
October 11, 2023
Opponent Testimony - H.B. 183
CANAPI Board of Directors

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

We write to you on behalf of the Board of Directors of CANAPI. CANAPI is a non-profit organization that provides services to the LGBTQ+ community and persons at risk and/or affected by HIV/AIDS in Summit and Portage counties. Our organization offers a variety of services, including education, support services, quality housing, and advocacy.

We are writing to express our strong opposition to House Bill 183. HB 183 is a dangerous and discriminatory bill that would force transgender students to use bathrooms and locker rooms that do not match their gender identity. This would be humiliating, isolating, and unsafe for transgender students.

Transgender students already face high rates of bullying and harassment in schools. House Bill 183 would worsen this by forcing them to use bathrooms and locker rooms that do not match their gender identity, sending a clear message that they are not welcome and that their identities are not recognized by the State of Ohio. This bill is based on the false assumption that transgender people are a threat to cisgender people, which is unsupported by evidence. In fact, transgender people are more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators. HB 183 would have a devastating impact on the mental and physical health of transgender students, creating a hostile learning environment for all.

CANAPI provides support to LGBTQ+ young adults through Lavender Landing, a collection of programs that help homeless and at-risk LGBTQ+ young adults (ages 18-29) to achieve housing stability. Unfortunately, programs such as Lavender Landing are needed in our community and across the state as LGBTQ+ youth face increased discrimination and challenges.

Discrimination and discriminatory laws, such as HB 183 contribute to instability for transgender and LGBTQ+ youth through their young adult life by increasing their risk of mental health problems, substance abuse, and dropping out of school.

We urge you to oppose HB 183. Transgender students deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. They deserve to be able to use bathrooms and locker rooms that match their gender identity.

Sincerely,

Kaye Rowe, Board President

Julie Beckert, Board Vice-President

Rebecca Callahan, Executive Director



Board Members:

Obar Banks

Justin Lepley

Andrew Barry

Stephanie Marsh

Frank D'Angelo

David McCartney

Jason Dodson

Phil Montgomery

Selina Garcia

Sally Nyburg

Cheryl Goodall-Martin

Josh Parks

Amina Hall

Andrew Schullerman

Anthony Kirby

Bryden Wayne

Brian Lamoda-Genêt

John Washington

