

Gabriel Lee
Opponent
House Bill 183
Ohio House Higher Education Committee

To the members of the Ohio House Higher Education Committee:

My name is Gabriel Lee. I use he/they pronouns. I am currently a first year medical student at a medical school in Ohio, and I am in firm opposition of HB 183. As the founder of a free LGBTQIA2+ clinic and an experienced volunteer with the Trevor Project, an LGBTQIA2+ youth crisis and suicide hotline, I have learned a lot of about the intricacies and experiences of LGBTQIA2+ people. I've experienced first hand the hardships of coming out and homophobia and have learned from others the experiences and associated hardships of transphobia, gender dysphoria, and transitioning. There are numerous studies that have demonstrated the validity of trans experiences, yet bills like this not only continue to invalidate these individuals but also put lives at risk. However, despite the insurmountable evidence that continues to provide validity for these communities, my specific issues with this bill are as follows.

First, this bill is planned to be implemented in all stages of public education, including K-12 schools. I'm incredibly curious how this bill attempts to actually confirm a students genitalia with the sex they were assigned at birth. Will teachers have to follow students into the bathroom and watch these young kids use the bathroom? To the parents of Ohio, do you want your children to have to expose their genitalia to their teachers and staff at school? Is that a safe learning environment for your kids? Regardless of the intentions of this bill, on principle alone it is impossible to implement this practically without emotionally scarring children and young adults by forcing them to prove their gender to adults. Instead, this bill will cause adult school staff to prey on students that do not fit the norm of what it looks like to be a "boy" or a "girl". For the students that do not fit the norm, whether they are trans or simply have a different sense of style - this will traumatize them. This will continue to contribute to the rising rates of suicide trans and non-binary youth. That blood will be on the hands of those who pass this bill.

Second, This bill puts trans people at risk. Cis-gender male aggressors compose the majority of sexual assault on trans people and cis-gender women. In Trans kids from K-12 more than 75% have experienced verbal harassment, and physical or sexual assault. Forcing the trans people to now go into their respective bathrooms will prime them for bullying and harassment. It will lead to rises in violence against trans people. This blood will be on the hands of those who pass this bill.

I could write so much more to emphasize how problematic this bill is. Please consider the lives of all Ohioans, not just those that fit your perception of a human. Recognize that all people deserve humanity even those who you view as different from you. As a queer medical student in Ohio, bills like this will not entice me to stay practicing in Ohio.

Soon, you will drive away all the individuals that aim to bridge gaps in care for your constituents. Keep this in mind as you proceed to vote on this distasteful and illogical piece of legislation.

Regards,
Gabriel Lee (he/him/they/them)