



Opponent Testimony
HB 183
Jona Hilario
OPAWL Co-Director
Ohio House Higher Education Committee

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

My name is Jona Hilario, I am a resident of Columbus, Ohio, a mother of two school-aged children in Hilliard Schools and current Statewide Co-Director of OPAWL. We are a statewide grassroots community of Asian, Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women, non-binary, queer and trans people in Ohio. Our organization is a multi-ethnic, multi-generational community and our 350+ members represent the diverse diaspora from Asia and the Pacific Islands.

OPAWL urges this committee to reject House Bill 183.

OPAWL stands with all transgender people, especially transgender youth in Ohio. Transgender and gender non-conforming students, like all students deserve safety. The rhetoric behind this bill suggests that transgender people are a danger to cis gender people when that is just not borne out by facts. The ideology behind this bill actually further endangers trans and gender non-conforming kids who are already at increased risk of experiencing violence compared to their cisgender peers. It has already been shown that restricting trans teens' access to bathrooms that correspond to their gender identity increases the risk of them being sexually assaulted¹ ([source](#)). This bill doesn't just potentially cause direct violence towards young people, but it also causes harms to LGBTQ+ young people's health in general²

I also question whether the enforcement of this bill has even been considered. Are people supposed to carry around birth certificates to go to the bathroom at an athletic event at a university? Not everyone can clearly be identified as typically



“boy” or “girl” and this body should not be requiring people to look a certain way either just to use a bathroom.

There are plenty of other issues that our students face that this committee could be spending time addressing including increasing access to mental healthcare and the rising cost of higher education. I urge this committee to stop enabling the bullying of transgender young people and work on other issues instead.

Sources:

- 1) “Transgender teens with restricted bathroom access at higher risk of sexual assault”
<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/hsph-in-the-news/transgender-teens-restricted-bathroom-access-sexual-assault/#:~:text=Researchers%20looked%20at%20data%20from,May%206%2C%202019%20CNN%20article.>
- 2) Issues Impacting LGBTQ Youth
https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/TrevorProject_Public1.pdf

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