

Brookville, OH

Oct 9, 2023

Members of the Committee,

The main victims of a bill like HB 183 are students, of course, but schools play other roles in our communities and economy as well.

In 2008, I founded PyOhio, the regional conference for Python, the world's most-used programming language. PyOhio draws hundreds of attendees annually from across the region and the nation and helps put Ohio on the technical map as something more than "flyover country".

The Ohio Union at Ohio State University hosts PyOhio each year. I'm transgender, and if HB 183 passes, I will no longer be able to attend the conference that I founded. That will demoralize the conference and send a terrible message about Ohio in the tech community.

The impact would hit my wife as well. She is a physicist at the Air Force Research Lab at WPAFB. A medical condition leaves her unable to drive significant distances, so I drive her to Wright State University. From there, I can telecommute to my job, while she can make the short drive onto the base. Without a place for me to work from near the base, she'll be unable to continue her career. We'll probably need to move to upstate New York, where she can work for the laboratory I'm currently telecommuting to, but this will be a loss to the Air Force and to Ohio.

We've lived in Ohio 23 years and shouldn't have to plead our economic value to stay here - our human dignity and our rights as citizens should be enough - but you should know about these consequences nonetheless.

Thank you for your attention.

- Catherine Devlin