

**Proponent Testimony for HB183  
Higher Education Committee  
October 16<sup>th</sup> 2023  
Melissa Karcz**

Chair Tom Young, Vice Chair Gayle Manning, Ranking Member Joe Miller, and members of the Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to submit my written testimony regarding HB183. My name is Melissa Karcz. I am a concerned Lima Ohio resident and parent.

I am submitting my written testimony in full support of HB183.

I became aware of trans boys using girls restrooms in November 2022 when my daughter came home and said she went to use the restroom and there was a boy dressed like a girl in there. She said she felt uncomfortable and left. I immediately contacted the school and met with the superintendent and 2 board members. I was told they didn't agree with allowing transgenders to use the restroom of their choice, but they are following state and federal law. I explained parents are not aware that this is happening in our schools. I was told most parents do know.

For a few months I started talking with parents and the community and most did not know this was happening in our schools. I learned there was no state or federal law. By March I started a Facebook group Elida Parents and Community Against Bathroom Policy. Very quickly I gained support from parents, churches, and the community. We established a team and started mailing out 2,000-3,000 flyers per month to bring awareness of our school putting the students in danger by allowing boys in the girl's restrooms and locker rooms and vice versa. We encouraged people to email the board members and come to the board meetings. Our board meetings grew from 30 people with some months around 500 concerned parents and community. Our Facebook page now has 1700 concerned parents and community. We have heard from many parents privately about what has happened to their child due to this dangerous policy. Some parents do not want to speak out due to backlash from the school administration, which has happened. Many have spoken at the board meetings to encourage the board to change their policy, from parents, to local business owners, and even the local Village of Elida Mayor. To date they will not change their policy.

By allowing trans boys in the girl's bathrooms and locker rooms it can cause many different dangerous situations for all students. I am going to give some examples which some has already occurred including rape. Girls are holding their urine all day as they don't want to deal with a boy being in there. You must remember some of these girls are in middle school and for them it's embarrassing especially as they begin to have a menstrual cycle and they don't want a boy to here the crinkling of paper from their feminine hygiene products. Some girls are in fear of being raped or videoed. A girl who feels like she is a boy uses the boys restroom. Any boy in there

could be accused of molesting that trans girl. The trans girl that uses the boy's restroom could get gang raped. As far as the locker room, that is another set of issues. In the middle school girls are being forced to change with a trans boy who makes lewd comments to them like "I wish I had your body." These are 12 and 13 year-old girls! One girl refused to change in front of the trans boy and refused to participate in gym. This policy is dangerous for ALL students including transgender. We have always had separate gender restrooms and locker rooms for a reason. We have a family restroom. I believe the policy should state students must use the restroom of their biological sex or the family restroom. The current policy would allow a 14-year-old girl to change with an 18-year-old trans boy. Girls should have the right to feel comfortable and safe while using the restroom at their own school that they are required to spend 7 hours a day.

By allowing students to use the restroom of the gender they identify what are we teaching them? Science, biology and anatomy are all lies?

This policy is also affecting their mental health. Students are being called bigots and being bullied if they do not agree with this policy. Which is causing anxiety among many students.

In December 2022 the Ohio Board of Education passed a resolution opposing Bidens proposed revisions to Title IX. Those revisions were only proposed and have never been enacted on. In May 2023 Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost said in his opinion there is no law and schools can place a policy for students to use restrooms and locker rooms of their biological sex. He further stated allowing men to share bathrooms and lockers rooms increases dangers to women and girls. From my understanding around 15 states have already passed a bathroom bill to require students to use the restroom and locker room of their biological sex.

Every day we send our kids to school they are in danger. I urge you to quickly pass HB183 for the safety protection of all students. You may contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you, Melissa Karcz