

Opponent Testimony for HB183
House Higher Education Committee

December 6, 2023

Cody Clark

Chair Young, Vice Chair Dobos, Ranking Member Miller, and members of the House Higher Education Committee,

My name is Cody and I am a 20 year old dancer and student. I am trans and disabled, and I use he/him or they/them pronouns. I am here to testify AGAINST hb183. I believe this bill is dangerous, completely out of bounds for government reach, and sets a terrible precedent.

As someone who has been to a private catholic school and has had to use the wrong bathroom (in my case, the “women’s” bathroom) for four years, the thought of trans students having to do that in public schools breaks my heart. I know what it’s like to be the odd one out in every bathroom: too masculine for the women’s room and too feminine for the men’s room. What happens then? In my case, I got called slurs and had to use the faculty bathroom, thanks to teachers who took pity on me. It was humiliating.

One particular part of the bill that is a particular reach is, and I quote, “No school shall permit a member of the female biological sex to share overnight accommodations with a member of the male biological sex. No school shall permit a member of the male biological sex to share overnight accommodations with a member of the female biological sex.” First of all, where does

this leave intersex students, or students whose primary and secondary sex characteristics do not match up to their supposed biological sex? Second, what gives the government the right to define housing accommodations for roommates and field trips when they cannot even figure out proper housing for folks on the street? Where are their priorities? Third, do you really think that this can be a safe and acceptable blanket statement for every scenario? For the trans girls fearing harassment from the boys, and vice versa? Who is this protecting?

I truly believe that being trans is a beautiful thing, and the fact that I have been able to blossom into my trans community in college is the greatest blessing of my life. but i almost didn't make it, due to discriminatory policies like the ones in front of you today. I ask you to consider, truly consider, your family, community, and constituents. whether you know it or not, you have the chance to fight for them right now. fight not only for your life, or the friends of friends of friends, but to set the record straight that this is well beyond the reach of the government, and that proponents of this bill are just grasping at straws to discriminate against an already deeply oppressed community. I beg of you: please do not make our lives harder.

Thank you for letting me speak. I'm happy to answer any questions.