

*Chair Lipps, Vice-Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the Public Health Policy Committee,*

I am addressing you today as a voting citizen of Ohio, a fellow public servant, and a transgender adult in opposition to HB68. I am opposed to this bill for many reasons.

HB68 is not only a prime example of government overreach, it also undermines both parental rights as well as medical freedom. Medical decisions are to be between the patient, their legal guardian, and their medical professionals. This bill will set a dangerous precedent for many other issues--including for non-transgender youth.

I did not receive gender-affirming care prior to being well into my 20s and my mental health suffered greatly. Before receiving gender-affirming care, I could not picture my future life at all. The idea of living to adulthood was unfathomable and my only goal was to survive the day.

I moved to Ohio almost 7 years ago and began receiving gender-affirming care as an adult, and now, access to gender-affirming care and knowledgeable medical professionals close to home is one of the main reasons I have decided to put down roots in Ohio. I am happier than I have ever been, and I can picture what my future looks like and I look forward to it. I have grown to love Ohio because of the care I've received and consider it my home. I hope you will keep my home safe for transgender youth and parental rights by voting no to the governmental overreach known as HB68.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and your commitment to public service.

Sincerely,

Rowan S. Patton