

**Hello, my name is Kris Patton and I was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio. I am the proud mother of two amazing daughters. My oldest daughter is transgender and gender affirming care saved her life. Prior to getting care our child could not see a future for herself. She had reached a point where she had to transition or she did not want to live anymore. She simply could not do it. As parents we had to learn as much as we possibly could about the transgender experience. It was all new to us. My daughter always told me “Mom, no offense, it might be new to you but it’s NOT new to me”. We listened to our daughter, we talked with professionals, we found a therapist (a process which in itself took months). We did everything in our power to support and love our child, we will never stop supporting her at every turn and that is why we are here today. We have made every careful and well thought out decision about her care bc we know it is what she needs to thrive and be who she is. Once she was able to access care, (which was a process that sometimes felt agonizingly slow, there was no “jumping into” this care, far from it) things turned around for our**

**daughter. It was a 180. It felt like a light switch turned on inside of her. She came out at school, started making true friends who supported and loved her for who she was. Her family, neighbors, teachers and school have been so amazing in their support. Now she talks about college and what she wants to major in. That is incredible to me bc shortly after she came out to us I saw an open notebook in her room with a school assignment asking students to write their hopes for the future. Our daughter had written "A chance to LIVE". Seeing that hit me so unbelievably hard. All of her life she had not been able to live as she truly was meant to live, and now, after getting the care and support she needed, she was beginning to live and thrive. Please do not take this away from her, it has given our child her life and her future. I stand before you as a parent who loves my kids more than anything. It is my right to make decisions about my child's medical care with her amazing doctors. That is what parental rights means. It does not mean discounting the rights of parents who you don't agree with. I am so proud of my daughter, I am so beyond proud of every young**

**person, every person, living their truth. True freedom is being able to be exactly who you are, period. Please do not move this bill forward. Thank you so much.**