

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

I strongly oppose HB 68. This bill is about taking rights away from parents and I cannot stand by silently without expressing my opinion.

I was born and raised in Ohio. I left after college to begin my career. I came back to have kids because I love it here. If there are decisions made that limit my ability to choose how I parent, Ohio may no longer be the right place for my family.

I am not going to pretend to understand the intricacies or what goes into parenting a child who is transgender but I do know how many choices I've had to make that have potential to completely change the trajectory of my children's life and there have been countless. I chose what medications I could take while pregnant, whether or not to eat sushi or lunch meat. I chose whether to breastfeed or formula feed my kids. I chose to send them to a particular preschool followed by a particular primary school. I chose their pediatrician and whether or not and even when to vaccinate. When my kids were sick, I chose whether or not to take them to the doctor. I have chosen if medical intervention was necessary when two of my kids displayed anxiety and depression. Just a few weeks ago, I made the decision for one my sons to have surgery on his hand. These decisions were made with their dad while seeking advice of the medical professionals who I sought out and decided to trust. I did research and formulated my own opinions and did my own follow through based on what I felt was right for my family with each and every one of these choices.

Every day 2 of my children take medication to help treat anxiety and depression. I have reason to believe that a transgender child taking puberty blockers would in fact work in the same fashion for someone who feels that their body is not their own. I admittedly know I don't know what the long term effects of the medicines my own children take could be, but I do know the short term for my children because I've seen them medicated verse unmedicated. I need my children to feel well mentally, emotionally, and physically. It is my utmost concern as a parent.

With all due respect, I know my kids, you do not. I eat, breathe, and sleep with their well being in mind. I spend countless hours worrying if I've made the right choices. But they are mine to make because I have to live with the consequences of the actions I take on behalf of my children. Taking away those choices from parents is irresponsible and quite frankly amoral.

Sincerely,
Lauren Boymel
Cincinnati, OH