

Dear Chair Lipps, Vice Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Liston and Members of the Public Health Committee,

I am writing to you to express steadfast opposition to HB68, which essentially outlaws Gender Affirming Care for Minors in Ohio. This bill is not only dangerous misappropriation of governmental power, it is a death sentence for transgender and genderqueer youth in your state. Without Gender Affirming Care, I would not be alive today to write you this statement. Access to hormone blockers and hormone therapy is the only way I can live my life to the fullest as a transgender person.

Over half of LGBTQIA+ youth have considered suicide (52%, as a recent study by the Trevor Project finds). I am part of that 52%. As a young transgender child, living in a body that was already foreign to me, but becoming more and more alien everyday with puberty, felt like living with a ticking time bomb. Except I was the bomb. Every day that passed where my body developed into something I despised was a day closer to the end of my life. The harassment and abuse I faced at the hands of society was unmanageable. I sat with this morbid reality until I learned about hormone therapy. Every year, on October 7th, we celebrate my "T-versary". That is how momentous this part of my transition was for me, as it is for so many of my transgender siblings. The team of doctors and therapists who participated in this life-saving care have continued to be a part of my vital support system in spite of a world that wants me exterminated.

By opposing this bill, you are playing an active role in dismantling the genocide that is being waged on transgender individuals in this country. Gender affirming care saves lives, and if this bill passes, it will create an even more life-threatening situation for transgender children. Kids and their families will be forced to leave this state to find care. You will be losing some of the most productive, intelligent, and driven members of society to more accepting states. I receive messages too often from friends and family checking in on my health and wellbeing because of the reputation Ohio carries for discrimination and transphobia. The only way to change the country's outlook on our state to a more positive, accepting, family-driven state is to oppose antiquated and dangerous legislation like HB68

Please Find my Witness Information Form attached below.

Respectfully submitted,

Ez Raider-Roth

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