

Ohio House Public Health Policy Committee

May 23, 2023

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Liston and members of the Public Health Policy Committee, I am writing in opposition to House Bill 68 which would ban gender-affirming care for youth in Ohio. Research shows that LGBTQ+ youth, including trans youth, are at greater risk of interpersonal or community violence, bullying, discrimination, and physical and mental health challenges including suicidal ideation. House Bill 68 seeks to solve a problem that does not exist. Youth who identify as transgender pose no danger to others. They want the same things all of us want: to show up as their full selves and live their best lives. I know several gender nonconforming youth and they deserve the same affirmation and respect as any other youth. To think you'd put their lives at danger by denying them care they have agreed on with their medical professionals and their families is unconscionable. Organizations representing medical and behavioral health providers are aligned in their opposition to this bill for one simple reason: lives are at stake. Gender-affirming care saves lives. We know that youth who have affirming networks are better prepared to navigate the stresses of prejudice, rejection, and mistreatment they may encounter. And we know that youth who report having even one trusted adult are 40% less likely to report a suicide attempt. Please do not adopt this legislation.

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