

Committee Chair Lipps, Vice Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Liston and Committee Members:

My name is Mary Klain, I am a lifelong Ohio resident and citizen who is very concerned about the trajectory Ohio is currently taking, especially regarding legislation making its way through the Statehouse. I write today to voice my vehement opposition to HB68. It is a cruel, harmful attack on Ohio families with gender diverse children. I believe parents in Ohio should have the right to choose medical and mental health treatment for their kids, with assistance from the child's medical team.

This bill is dangerous because it would prevent children from getting access to evidence-based healthcare in Ohio. It also puts our young Ohioans at risk because it allows legislators to occupy space between a patient and their healthcare team. That is not the appropriate place for legislators; especially those who do not have a medical or mental health background!

Curiously enough, a reliable news source, Heather Cox Richardson, posted about legislation exactly like HB68 in her post yesterday:

“A March 8 article in Mother Jones by Madison Pauly exposed how the wave of anti-trans legislation passing through Republican-dominated state legislatures is written and pushed by well-funded Christian activists and organizations who argue...that they are protecting children (although 86% of trans or nonbinary young people have reported the attacks on them are affecting their mental health, and nearly half have seriously considered suicide).”

“Advocates for those laws inaccurately claim that they are protecting children from genital mutilation, but as Nancy Goldstein of the Texas Observer pointed out, the American Academy of Pediatrics stands behind gender-affirming care. Dr. Joshua Safer, the executive director of the Mount Sinai Center for Transgender Medicine and Surgery in New York City, explains: No other countries “are reconsidering the use of hormones and surgeries as first-line treatment for transgender children because hormones and surgeries are not first-line treatment for transgender children.... First-line interventions include mental health intakes and social adjustments.... Puberty blockers sometimes follow.” Those treatments are reversible if a patient changes their mind.” [Heather Cox Richardson “Letters from an American.” Web blog post. Substack. 21 May 2023](#)

All this to say, I clearly see the attempt to dehumanize young Ohioans whose lives are already challenging enough. It is a slippery slope when legislators get involved with making moral decisions for their constituents.

Additionally, this type of legislation makes Ohio a pariah instead of attractive to business investments. Ohioans deserve better than terrible legislation like this!

Sincerely,  
Mary Klain