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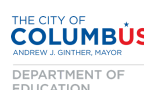
Ohio House Public Health Policy Committee
1 Capitol Square Columbus, OH 43215

Chairman Lipps, Ranking Member Liston and members of the Ohio House Public Health Policy Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to House Bill 68. My name is Mallory Golski, and I use she/her pronouns. I'm the civic engagement and advocacy manager for Kaleidoscope Youth Center, Ohio's largest and longest standing organization serving and supporting LGBTQIA+ youth and young adults, ages 12-24.

Through my work at KYC, I have the opportunity to talk to and learn from countless trans, nonbinary and gender expansive youth. I wonder, how many of you – including the bill's sponsors – have actually taken the time to talk to *any* transgender person, especially transgender youth, to learn about their lives and experiences? Have you been able to hear *their* thoughts before even considering how you'll vote on legislation that will severely impact these young people?

My colleagues and I talked to some of the young transgender, nonbinary and other gender expansive youth who would be most impacted by this intrusive and dangerous piece of legislation. Unfortunately, these folks are not to testify here in person, either because they're in school, they're not out or because being here could pose a risk to their safety. Here are just some of the comments they've shared:

"When people talk about trans kids a lot of the time they focus on the trans part and forget that trans kids are also kids. For me specifically, as a trans guy who has been able to be on testosterone. It has helped a lot with not only my confidence but also not quite feeling so hopeless and like I'll never be able to be seen as who I am. It felt freeing. For me, personally, as a transmasculine teen in Columbus, since I have started testosterone, I have felt so much more hope that I might be able to live as myself, in a body that feels like mine. Hope that there might be a time when I don't dread leaving the house because people still see me as a girl. Hope that I might one day be free to be myself, without fear that my access to this healthcare will be stripped away. Hope that I might one day wake up and finally be happy." – **KYC Youth**



“My life shouldn’t be your decision.” – KYC Youth

“Not just trans people get gender affirming care. If a cis female gets breast reduction surgery, that’s gender affirming care. Cis women might take estrogen to make their breasts grow. Some men who may not grow hair might get a hair transplant. That’s gender affirming surgery. You already have to prove all of these things just to get [HRT]. It’s not like you can just talk to your doctor. Go worry about school shootings instead.” – KYC Youth

“The proposed bill violates the Eighth Amendment because the Eighth Amendment says it’s unconstitutional to use cruel and unusual punishment. It’s basically forcing gender dysphoria to not be treated even though there’s a known, proven and effective treatment.” – KYC Youth

“Before even getting on HRT, people have to go through a lot of therapies. They can’t just walk into the store and get hormones. It’s a whole process. Another major point that people are making for why minors shouldn’t receive gender-affirming care is that they are “mutilating their bodies.” I just don’t understand that when people can get nose jobs, tattoos or other plastic surgery at age 16 and those are mostly just cosmetic reasons and this is a non-choice type of deal that would benefit the person.” – KYC Youth

“I fought so many battles, I’ve escaped death so many times and I’ve jumped over too many hurdles too many times for my life to not matter any more.” – KYC Youth

“There’s a housing crisis, there’s a queer youth housing crisis and instead of meeting constituencies in vast swaths of these cities and rural spaces which are actively being disenfranchised by a system that doesn’t support them, we’re focusing our attention on these issues that ultimately achieve nothing and benefit no one.” – KYC Youth

“Without a doubt my intrusive thoughts about self harm significantly increased when I had to wait a few more months for testosterone because the doctor wasn’t there. I can practically guarantee you that if I had to wait for two more years to get on testosterone, I wouldn’t make it. Basically, do you want to kill kids? Because to me, that seems like what your goal is.” – KYC Youth

“People can identify however they want to. Are you sure you want to identify as the villain?” – KYC Youth



Kaleidoscope Youth Center stands in firm opposition to House Bill 68. Transgender young people aren't nefarious, and they're most certainly not "demonic." They're not trying to intrude on other people's lives – they just want to have the opportunity to authentically live their own.

Please trust young people when they tell us who they are, stop meddling in people's most private health care decisions, and let trans kids have the opportunity to be themselves. Leave trans kids alone and vote no on this discriminatory bill. Thank you.

