

HB 68 Ohio's Ban on Gender-Affirming Care
Wednesday May 24, 2023 9:30 am
Ohio State House, Room 121

Chair Lipps, Vice-chair Stewart, Ranking Member Liston & members of the Public Policy Committee, my name is Kat Scaglione and I am a parent of a transgender child. I am submitting written testimony in opposition to House Bill 68.

House Bill 68 is a huge government overreach that puts parents in the impossible position of not being able to support their children and make important medical decisions about their best interests.

I've seen the authenticity, joy and mental health shift from giving up to a life worth living that resulted from allowing my child to explore who they are. We traveled a challenging and difficult path to get there. We didn't jump in. We did research and had a lot of difficult conversations before deciding on what this journey could look like for my daughter and our family. There are many doctor's appointments with various specialists, continual monitoring from mental health professionals, and lots of patience on our end as we work to decide what's healthy, safe and right for my child as a team. We don't just defer to the experts, we also weigh and research the information we receive to make well researched decisions.

Teens can be fickle. Friend groups shift. Style can change, but the confidence and self esteem my child has gained from being her authentic self has never wavered. She has known who she was for a long time and has only grown in herself since we started this process. We have lost friends and family and had to make many changes but not once has she felt unsure or any regret.

While she attempts to continue blossoming, this bill looms over our family like a dark cloud. We are anxious, we are exhausted, we are scared. The idea that this peace my family and daughter have invested our hearts and souls in could be ripped away is terrifying. We watch as kids at school, and others around us buy into the dangerous narrative about gender-affirming care and transgender kids. We not only worry about meeting our daughter's needs but also about her safety and what the future looks like if House Bill 68 passes.

My daughter should be worried about her friends, her grades, what she might want to do after high school. She should be focused on her school dances and summer break. But, the world around her is growing smaller. Her ability to live and interact with her surroundings is shrinking as laws creep in around the country. How do we raise a confident, independent child when she's being taught to hate herself and that the world around her wants to bar her from being who she is at her core?

At the end of the day, parents cannot parent if they are prohibited from making important medical decisions for their children. We can't meet our children's needs without access to the care that's right for them and the ability to learn more about the resources that best fit our child. Journeys like ours don't disappear when access does-they become increasingly more dangerous. I am pleading with you to stand up against House Bill 68 and allow families to make their own decisions about their child's care.

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