

Written-Only Opponent Testimony for HB 8
Senate Education Committee
December 12, 2023

Esther Pittinger, Public Library Employee

Chair Andre O Brenner, Vice Chair Sandra O'Brien, Ranking Member Catherine D. Ingram, and members of the Senate Government Oversight Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to add my voice to those testifying today. My name is Esther Pittinger. I was born and raised here in Ohio and presently work at the public library system in Hamilton County. I am writing to oppose HB 8 and express extreme concern regarding this bill and others like it here in Ohio's statehouse and across the country.

At the library and at my synagogue, I work with many children from many demographics. That includes children across the LGBTQ+. These kids just want to be kids, to feel loved and cared for and supported. This bill and those like it accomplish just the opposite. They not only tangibly harm LGBTQ+ youth, they foster an environment where trans youth feel targeted, unwanted, and discriminated against.

If we truly care about protecting our children, this bill can not pass.

In particular, I fear for those children who would be put into dangerous situations if their identities were revealed to their parents. As a member of the LGBTQ+ community, I know many, many people who could have been put in horrible, abusive, and harmful situations if laws like this were in place when they were young.

I am terrified for the fate of this state I call home, that I was born and raised in. I am terrified that this state will no longer be safe for the people and communities that I love. I can not overstate my objection to this bill and those like it; I find it hard to put to paper the fear that I feel, the sad, growing realization that, going forward, I may not be able to call this place home in the face of such legislation proposed in the Statehouse.

I ask that you please listen to my words and the words of those who can speak more eloquently and knowledgeably than I against this bill. I ask that you please vote no and prove to me, and to those I love, that we have a place here yet.

Thank you for your time.