

**Testimony: Opposition for House Bill 8**  
**Katherine (Kat) Steiner**  
**12/11/2023**

Hello.

My name is Kat Steiner and my pronouns are she and her. I live in Fairfax, Ohio, which is a conservative suburb of Cincinnati. Professionally, I'm the Chief Development Officer at the YWCA Greater Cincinnati and have raised millions of dollars for nonprofits that benefit the community. Personally I serve on the board of PFLAG Cincinnati and am the mother of two queer kids.

I am strongly opposed to House Bill 8, specifically that require counselors and teachers to out a student that questions their gender identity or sexual orientation to their parents.

My master's degree is in Higher Education Administration. In education there are theories about how young people change and why. A well renowned theory is from Baxter Magolda and is the Self Authorship Theory. Self authorship is "the internal capacity to define one's beliefs, identity, and social relations." The key word is internal. You know when you ask if someone would jump off a bridge - would you? You are actually teaching the belief that you can rely on your own internal values to make decisions.

There is inherent value in learning to think for yourself and sometimes this is not in alignment with your families belief system.

I see this first hand in my professional position and also at PFLAG meetings. Let me tell you about a few people who've made an impact on me:

1. KiKi - Kiki had lived as a woman the majority of her life. She was kicked out of her home at 13 and lived on the streets, surviving as a prostitute and recently is trying escape an abusive relationship at 29.
2. Katie - Katie sat in a PFLAG meeting and quietly sobbed the entire meeting because she saw parents who loved their kid try to figure it out. Katie's parents are evangelical Christian and do not know she's gay. She's 30 something.
3. Christopher - came to PFLAG in college and it became his sense of family. His family disowned him for a decade because he was gay and they were devout Catholics.
4. Tina - Tina has lived as a woman for 30 years. Her sister in her 80s still has no idea because Tina valued the relationship with her and know she would be cut out of her life if she revealed she is trans.
5. Mitchell - Mitchell is a 60 year old man. Upon his father's death last year, he found a note his father left stating that Mitchell was going to hell and that he would never accept him as his son.

First, in what world is a teacher undermining the safety of a student? This bill is about turning education into a political lightning rod and further putting LGBTQ+ students at risk. Take it from the people who I just shared, this bill creates a culture of intimidation. It puts teachers and educators in impossible situations and where the work is doubled and they're perceived as the enemies.

Students who are not out to their parents are not out for a reason. If we want to raise critical thinkers, then self authorship cannot be hand in hand with a parent. I say this as a parent. Keep

state and church separated and stop the idea that HB 8 is about parents rights. It's about censorship and is a threat to existing civil rights.

Respectfully, I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this dangerous bill. Think of me and those who I mentioned.