

I am an Ohio resident and a parent, as well as a trans ally, and I am very concerned about the environment for queer and trans youth in Ohio today. I am writing to express my grave concerns about HB8 and the detrimental effect it will undoubtedly have on the youth of Ohio.

There is significant data showing that trans youth are at a high risk of suicide. Up to 40% of them attempt suicide. However, there is also significant data showing that having even one supportive adult in their life significantly decreases the chances they will attempt suicide. Some trans kids have this support from their families, but unfortunately many do not. Kids who are struggling with their gender and know their families won't support them may be able to find that support from a teacher or school staff member. But HB 8 will take away this opportunity. These kids won't be able to look for the support at school that they can't get at home, not if they know that they'll be outed to their unsupportive parents. And this will cost more children their lives. Remember that suicide rate? You have the power to reduce it.

It doesn't matter what you believe about trans people, they aren't going anywhere. Even if you don't agree with their choices, deliberately advancing measures that crush their mental health support is a terrible thing to do. Ohio Senators need to protect trans children, not target them, and vote down this deeply cruel bill in order for school to stay a safe place for kids.