

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

### HOUSE BILL 8 – THE UNSAFE STUDENTS ACT

Dear Chairperson Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Anne Kmieck. I am a newly retired educator from the Cleveland area. I am strongly against *House Bill 8, The Unsafe Students Act* for the following reasons.

I worked with colleagues, not just in my school, but with a broader committee of professional educators for over 15 years to understand the health, data, science, and other schools evidenced-based written guidelines to inform our own school's policies regarding keeping our schools safe for all students. This work also addressed students whose self-knowledge identified within the human spectrum between those of us whose orientation and expression align with our biological gender. These students are aware from a young age that they are different and in the spectrum of LGBTQ+. The data is clear that if they are isolated and do not have adult support for this natural manifestation of human complexity that goes back into ancient human history, they are at risk for self-harm and suicide.

#### The problems with **House Bill 8—The Unsafe Students Act**

- This bill assumes that students don't have communication with their parents and that students themselves can't identify whether their home is a safe place.
- This bill assumes that if a student expresses fear of telling their parents at a particular moment in their childhood, that a wide range of school professionals, including psychologists, will indefinitely ignore the role of parents in these cases.
- This bill assumes that there are no special cases that a minority of parents, who do not understand human biology, could potentially react by abusing or kicking a student out of their home.

I urge you to consider my testimony and vote no to this child-endangering bill. Please consider the testimonies of professionals in education, academia, and health, and to listen to adults in the LGBTQ+ community whose journeys as children were fraught and even dangerous owing to adults who were not educated on human biology and its full spectrum of expression in orientation and identity.

Respectfully,

Anne Kmieck