

To: Brenner@OhioSenate.gov

Subject: Testimony on HB 8 to Senate Education Committee

December 9, 2024

Lynn Buffington

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

Thank you for considering my testimony. I write to oppose the harmful HB 8. I am from Beavercreek in Greene County, 70th Ohio House District. I am retired and have lived in Ohio for more than twenty four years. My husband is not yet retired. We have two young adult children both of whom graduated from high school in Ohio. Both are professionals and neither are LGBTQ+. It pains me to say that both live in other states and would never consider returning to Ohio to live because of the many state policies that they oppose, including but not limited to the recently passed ban on much medical care for trans youth and the recently passed bathroom bill.

Not only do these continued attacks on LGBTQ+ community harm our state economy and reputation, but most importantly they harm Ohio children. It is estimated that about 3% of children and youth are transgender and many more are otherwise LGBTQ+. Banning books, fiction and nonfiction, that deal with these issues decreases opportunities for understanding of LGBTQ+ children and teens by their straight peers and marginalizes LGBTQ+ children and teens, thus increasing the risk of violence against them and the risk to them of depression and suicide. I urge you to remember former Ohio Senator Rob Portman who famously opposed same sex marriage until his own son came out as gay. We all have LGBTQ+ children and youth in our families and communities, whether we are aware or not. It's time we support all our children, youth and families.

I urge you to not pass HB 8 out of committee.

Thank you.

Lynn Buffington, 937-657-0426