

HB8 Written Testimony
Opponent Written-Only Testimony for HB8
Senate Education Committee
12/9/2024

Theresa Augustin

Chair 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 Theresa Augustin (She/Her). I am a software project manager and a small business owner of 10+ years. I am also a Research Assistant at Cleveland State University's School of Law studying Data Privacy and Cybersecurity. I am currently working for an ecommerce AI platform. I oppose the bill in its entirety.

After exhibiting depression, I told a teacher that I was attracted to the same-sex. She suggested I talk to my parents to get support. Following the conversation with my parents, their reaction was so strong that I moved out of their house and sunk further into depression. I was fortunate that I had friends to support with housing and basic needs and could provide for my basic needs. I fear that this bill will have impacts on children's mental health and increase youth homelessness.

From a data privacy perspective, the bill infringes on UNICEF's Rights for Children 16: Protection of Privacy, 13: Sharing Thoughts Freely, 14: Freedom of Thought and Religion. The intention of data protections for children is to protect the child from commercial surveillance. Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC.org) encourages a comprehensive privacy law. The EPIC comments to the NTIA on RFC state 'the constant monitoring and profiling of children online can make it difficult to develop a sense of autonomy and personality' (Epic). I believe HB8 does not uphold the intention of privacy from commercial surveillance, but rather puts children at risk and prohibits children from developing autonomy, personality and identity.

As a lesbian woman and passionate data privacy software expert, I do not believe that HB8 is aligned with the intention to support the growth and safety of children. I believe that HB8 does not protect children's data privacy and if enacted would be a driver of youth homelessness and mental health. I ask that you consider the intention of this bill and vote no.

Thank you. I'm happy to answer any questions.

References:

UNICEF.

Epic.org. *EPIC Comments to the NTIA on RFC Regarding Youth Mental Health, Safety & Privacy Online*.
<https://epic.org/documents/epic-comments-to-the-ntia-on-rfc-regarding-youth-mental-health-safety-privacy-online/>