

December 9, 2024

To whom it may concern,

I am writing as an educator and parent to strongly encourage the senators to vote NO on HB8. This bill is vague and intrusive. It completely undermines the trust that school personnel must build to educate a whole child. Children grow and change both at home, and away from their families. They can try on different personalities and traits while among peers, teachers, and relatives. Schools MUST be a safe space for students to develop, and sometimes school is the only place where a child has a trusted adult. Including counselors and therapists in this bill is an insult to their profession and a breach of HIPAA.

All school personnel are already mandatory reporters. This would cover any instance of harm to a child. A student wanting to be called a preferred name and/or pronoun does no harm to the child and is not a permanent body change or legal status. We allow students to choose nicknames, why not allow preferred names? What IS harmful is denying a student autonomy over something that does no harm to others, or outing students to unsupportive, controlling, or abusive parents.

In conclusion, students must feel safe at school to learn and grow. Children and young adults must explore the world around them to grow. Ohio HB8 will cause more harm than good and will only hurt the most vulnerable students- the ones who can't trust their families with information about their true selves.

Thank you,

Chloe Busch

Math teacher (9-12)

Mother of two school-aged children