

Dear Chair Brenner and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Sean Martin. I live at 1113 Shangrila Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio. I am writing as a concerned parent, constituent and advocate for inclusive, supportive public education to express my strong opposition to House Bill 8.

This bill, while framed as a parental rights measure, poses significant harm to students, particularly those in LGBTQ+ communities, by creating a climate of fear and exclusion in our schools. HB 8 requires parental notification about changes to a student's mental, physical, or emotional well-being and mandates notification about any "sexuality" content.

These provisions, though seemingly neutral, are deeply problematic in practice. The term "sexuality" is coded language targeting LGBTQ+ identities and experiences, which sends a harmful message that such topics—and the students who embody them—are inherently inappropriate or controversial.

This legislation could jeopardize the safety and well-being of vulnerable students. Many young people turn to trusted educators or school counselors when they feel they cannot safely share their identities or struggles at home. By mandating parental notification, HB 8 risks outing students without their consent, potentially subjecting them to rejection, hostility, or even harm in unsupportive households.

Additionally, HB 8 would stifle inclusive curricula and open conversations that foster understanding and acceptance among students. Schools should be spaces where all students feel valued, affirmed, and safe to express themselves, free from fear of judgment or reprisal.

I urge the committee to reject HB 8 and focus instead on policies that promote the mental, emotional, and physical well-being of all students. Ohio's young people deserve a public education system that supports their growth and development, regardless of their identities or circumstances.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue, and I hope you will act to protect Ohio's students by opposing HB 8.

Sincerely,

Sean Martin

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