

December 9, 2024

Ohio Senate  
Education Committee

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and other members,

As a member of the LGBTQ+ community and the parent of a 9-year-old who is also LGBTQIA+, I strongly urge you to oppose Ohio House Bill 8, the so-called "Parents' Bill of Rights." This bill, which mandates that schools disclose a student's LGBTQ+ identity to their parents, risks devastating consequences for vulnerable youth.

Studies show that LGBTQ+ youth in non-affirming environments are more than twice as likely to experience depression and consider suicide compared to their peers. According to the Trevor Project's 2022 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health, having at least one accepting adult in a young person's life can significantly reduce their risk of suicide by 40%. HB 8 would undermine trust between students and educators, depriving children of critical support systems.

As a parent, I work hard to ensure that my child feels safe and supported both at home and at school. However, not every LGBTQ+ child has that privilege. Outing students without their consent can lead to rejection, emotional harm, and in some cases, even homelessness. The American Academy of Pediatrics has underscored the importance of confidential support for LGBTQ+ youth, particularly in navigating their identities safely and healthily.

Furthermore, organizations like Nationwide Children's Hospital and the American Academy of Pediatrics have strongly opposed policies that disrupt the confidentiality essential for youth well-being. By passing this bill, Ohio risks driving away skilled educators and jeopardizing the safety of students who simply seek acceptance.

I urge you to reject HB 8 and any legislation that threatens the safety and dignity of Ohio's children. Please prioritize creating an inclusive environment where all students can succeed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



**Dani Esperanza**

89 Main St.

The Plains, OH 45780

Dani.esperanza@outlook.com

740-591-4111