

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

My name is Danielle Wirick and I am a resident of Defiance Ohio. I am a parent and a member of the LGBTQ community. Thank you for the opportunity today to submit my testimony in opposition to SB 8.

I would firstly like to ask who this legislation is for? It is written in the guise of parents rights but it takes nothing into account for the children themselves including their safety and their right to learn material that may keep them safe. Some children only come to realize they were abused because age appropriate materials were available to give them the vocabulary to speak about their experience to adults. Allowing parents to deny their children access to age appropriate materials and lessons about their bodies and how to keep themselves safe is essential education. This does not preserve their innocence. This does not keep a child from being gay or trans. It merely keeps them miserable and wishing they don't exist. When society washes their hands of their responsibility to these children because they wish these children didn't exist, it becomes a self fulfilling prophecy. Many of these children will commit suicide or end up dead at the hands of someone they know that enabled the idea that their existence isn't okay. If you vote yes on this bill their blood will be on your hands. If they end up homeless because their parents kicked them out because while they correctly assessed their parents weren't safe and you required administration to out them, that'll be on your hands too. Many of them already do become homeless.

With the ratio of proponent to opposition testimony you've had on this bill, who is it for? It's certainly not for the kids or to help the schools or the school therapists. It's unethical and its extreme big government overreach.