

Dear Senators, I am adamantly opposed to legislation that bans gender affirming care. Gender affirming care saves lives. It does not mutilate children. There are guidelines around what level of care is allowed to be provided based on each child. The AMA as well as other health organizations support gender affirming care. Based on a peer reviewed study by the Trevor Project, transgender and nonbinary individuals are approximately 2.5 times more likely to commit suicide. Death is far worse than medical treatment in my opinion. Please go through the process with a family member who is a minor and tell me it's an easy process. There are many dr's appts, follow up visits, questions that make a child cringe because they have to provide information that triggers their gender dysphoria. Gender dysphoria requires gender affirming care, especially until a child reaches an age where they are capable of making decisions around surgical procedures. You may say but they can have surgery prior to becoming a legal adult. Having dealt with this, I have not met a single doctor who will perform any surgery on the genitalia until a child becomes an adult. Top surgery is a different subject but even then, other 16 year olds are having top surgery just because they want larger breasts. If one is not mutilation, why is the other?

There is also the issue that goes beyond just treatment of the child. What do you plan to do to retain talent within in the state when this passes? Have you not thought about the next generation of individuals that want to live in Ohio? Between myself and my husband we have 3 degrees. My child loves the state and is a straight A student. Have you not seen what has happened to families in states where legislation like this has passed? Have you not heard of the number of students leaving states where this type of legislation has passed, leaving universities? What will the impact be to the future of the state? Or does that not matter as long as it's a state of heterosexual cisgender individuals?

Please think about this. It is not ok to take rights from parents to help their children and their children's medical teams make the decisions that are best for the child. It's not ok to increase the suicide rate of teens, just because you don't like it. It's not ok to infringe on someone's rights because your religion doesn't find it ok. Please, as a mother, I beg of you, don't pass this legislation. My family has already been uprooted in one state that passed this discriminatory legislation. I cannot hesitate to take action when my child is impacted.

Thank you for your time and please don't vote yes for this bill.