

Dear Chair Roegner and Members of the Government Oversight Committee,  
I am writing to oppose H.B. 68 because it is dangerous for patients who do not identify with their assigned gender at birth.

HB 68, the Enact Ohio Saving Adolescents from Experimentation "SAFE" Act, would harm the safety and well-being of LGBTQ+ youth across Ohio. Please do not support this bill and vote no.

Gender affirming care saves lives. This bill would prohibit mental health providers from diagnosing and treating minors without the consent of the patient's legal guardian. Mental health support is a life-saving intervention for youth of all backgrounds and identities. The foundation of the provider-patient relationship is trust and we must respect the sanctity of patient confidentiality. Without this, patients will no longer feel safe sharing their struggles with providers and will face isolation and harm. Our youth should have access to doctors and other health professionals who can help them with open minds and who can connect them to mental health resources that fall under gender-affirming care

In order to protect all our children, we must ensure they have access to the best, evidence-based physical and mental health treatment. HB 68 directly puts already vulnerable LGBTQ+ youth at risk of losing access to vital healthcare, including forcibly re-transition all transgender youth in the state of Ohio. This legislation would irreversibly traumatize and disrupt the lives of Ohio families, many of which would be forced to flee the state to protect their children. The so-called "SAFE Act" isn't safe and poses a danger to all Ohio youth and families. Restricting any healthcare, including gender affirming care, will only harm those who most need support from their providers.

Dominique Rehl  
Osteopathic Medical Student Youngstown, OH