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Hello, Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the committee. My name is Nikki Hudson and I currently serve as the Vice President of the Worthington Board of Education. The view expressed today are my own, as one member of our Board of Education.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition of House Bill 68. I will address first the portion of the bill that would ban trans women and girls from playing K-12 sports in Ohio. I struggle to understand why this is even a topic of discussion, as the evidence demonstrates that there is not a “problem to solve.” The Ohio High School Athletic Association (“OHSAA”) has had in place since the 2015-16 school year a Transgender Student Policy and process that is working.

When originally adopting this policy, the OHSAA reaffirmed several important points that should also be prioritized by this committee:

- Participation in interscholastic and intercollegiate athletics *is a valuable part of the education experience for all students.*
- Transgender student athletes should have *equal opportunity* to participate in sports.
- Policies governing sports should be based on *sound medical knowledge and scientific validity.*
- Policies governing the participation of transgender students in sports *should be fair in light of the tremendous variation among individuals in strength, size, musculature, and ability.*
- *The medical privacy of transgender students should be preserved.*

Since the 2015-16 school year, there have been a total of 20 transgender females that have played on girls’ sports teams. Compare that to the 350,000-400,000 athletes that compete every year in high school sports in Ohio and then please explain to me why we even spending time on this non-issue that would be incredibly harmful and discriminatory to our transgender athletes.

With regards to the portion of HB68 that would ban gender-affirming care for minors, I urge you to follow the recommendation of professional who base their decisions on the ethical principles of medicine and evidence-based research. Nationwide Children’s Hospital, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, Akron Children’s Hospital, the Ohio Children’s Hospital Association – just to name a few – who have debunked the false claims that have been made to support this bill, articulated in a sound, evidence-based manner how the gender-affirming care that is currently offered is ethical and based on the best available scientific evidence, and stressed the damage this bill would cause to our most vulnerable children. Please respect and follow the advice of the experts in this area.

I respectfully urge you to table HB68. Thank you for your time and attention.