

Opponent Testimony for HB 68  
Senate Government Oversight Committee  
Dec. 26, 2023  
Courtney Brown

Members of the Senate Government Oversight Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Courtney Brown (She/Her). I am an Ohioan, a business owner, a wife, a parent, and a trans woman. I'm here to Oppose HB 68.

There has been a ton of testimony before you. It includes testimony of celebrity detransitioners, flown in from out of state. It includes the testimony of religious leaders. It has had medical doctors speaking on a field that they don't work in.

It feels like everyone gets a chance to testify except for trans children living under unsupporting parents.

I would like to submit the testimony of a young trans girl from Ohio. A girl who was being forced to experience the wrong puberty.

The Final Testimony of Leelah Alcorn

If you are reading this, it means that I have committed suicide and obviously failed to delete this post from my queue.

Please don't be sad, it's for the better. The life I would've lived isn't worth living in... because I'm transgender. I could go into detail explaining why I feel that way, but this note is probably going to be lengthy enough as it is. To put it simply, I feel like a girl trapped in a boy's body, and I've felt that way ever since I was 4. I never knew there was a word for that feeling, nor was it possible for a boy to become a girl, so I never told anyone and I just continued to do traditionally "boyish" things to try to fit in.

When I was 14, I learned what transgender meant and cried of happiness. After 10 years of confusion I finally understood who I was. I immediately told my mom, and she reacted extremely negatively, telling me that it was a phase, that I would never truly be a girl, that God doesn't make mistakes, that I am wrong. If you are reading this, parents, *please* don't tell this to your kids. Even if you are Christian or are against transgender people don't ever say that to someone, especially your kid. That won't do anything but make them hate them self. That's exactly what it did to me.

My mom started taking me to a therapist, but would only take me to christian therapists, (who were all very biased) so I never actually got the therapy I needed to cure me of my depression. I only got more christians telling me that I was selfish and wrong and that I should look to God for help.

When I was 16 I realized that my parents would never come around, and that I would have to wait until I was 18 to start any sort of transitioning treatment, which absolutely broke my heart. The longer you wait, the harder it is to transition. I felt hopeless, that I was just going to look like a man in drag for the

rest of my life. On my 16th birthday, when I didn't receive consent from my parents to start transitioning, I cried myself to sleep.

I formed a sort of a "[Expletive] you" attitude towards my parents and came out as gay at school, thinking that maybe if I eased into coming out as trans it would be less of a shock. Although the reaction from my friends was positive, my parents were pissed. They felt like I was attacking their image, and that I was an embarrassment to them. They wanted me to be their perfect little straight christian boy, and that's obviously not what I wanted.

So they took me out of public school, took away my laptop and phone, and forbid me of getting on any sort of social media, completely isolating me from my friends. This was probably the part of my life when I was the most depressed, and I'm surprised I didn't kill myself. I was completely alone for 5 months. No friends, no support, no love. Just my parent's disappointment and the cruelty of loneliness.

At the end of the school year, my parents finally came around and gave me my phone and let me back on social media. I was excited, I finally had my friends back. They were extremely excited to see me and talk to me, but only at first. Eventually they realized they didn't actually give a [Expletive] about me, and I felt even lonelier than I did before. The only friends I thought I had only liked me because they saw me five times a week.

After a summer of having almost no friends plus the weight of having to think about college, save money for moving out, keep my grades up, go to church each week and feel like [Expletive] because everyone there is against everything I live for, I have decided I've had enough. I'm never going to transition successfully, even when I move out. I'm never going to be happy with the way I look or sound. I'm never going to have enough friends to satisfy me. I'm never going to have enough love to satisfy me. I'm never going to find a man who loves me. I'm never going to be happy. Either I live the rest of my life as a lonely man who wishes he were a woman or I live my life as a lonelier woman who hates herself. There's no winning. There's no way out. I'm sad enough already, I don't need my life to get any worse. People say "it gets better" but that isn't true in my case. It gets worse. Each day I get worse.

That's the gist of it, that's why I feel like killing myself. Sorry if that's not a good enough reason for you, it's good enough for me. As for my will, I want 100% of the things that I legally own to be sold and the money (plus my money in the bank) to be given to trans civil rights movements and support groups, I don't give a [Expletive] which one. The only way I will rest in peace is if one day transgender people aren't treated the way I was, they're treated like humans, with valid feelings and human rights. Gender needs to be taught about in schools, the earlier the better. My death needs to mean something. My death needs to be counted in the number of transgender people who commit suicide this year. I want someone to look at that number and say "that's [Expletive] up" and fix it. Fix society. Please.

Goodbye, (Leelah) Josh Alcorn

Leelah then walked to the nearest highway and stepped in front of a semi. She was 17. She should be 26, today. I ask that you please consider this testimony and vote no on HB 68, before this legislation creates the conditions for more needless suffering.

Thank you.