

Dear Chair Roegner and Members of the Government Oversight Committee,

I am writing to oppose HB 68 because this bill will bring harm to the youth of Ohio.

HB 68 infiltrates a family's right to make important medical decisions that should only involve their medical providers – not the government.

According to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and World Health Organization, gender affirming care encompasses biological, psychological, behavioral, and social aspects of health.

As published in the Journal of Adolescent Health, gender affirming care has been proven to significantly reduce suicide attempts and depression. Legislators have no business banning evidence-based science, especially affirming, professionally endorsed services by physicians, mental health professionals, and other licensed providers.

We must protect our children and ensure that they have access to best-practice physical and mental health treatment. HB 68 directly places already vulnerable LGBTQ+ youth at risk of losing access to vital, best-practice healthcare. This legislation would upend the lives of Ohio families, many of which would be forced to flee the state to protect their children.

Undoubtedly, a state which endorses harmful legislation wherein medical professionals are intimidated to provide inadequate care, at risk of losing their license, is *not* a state which will retain quality medical professionals. Ultimately, those paying the price will be the hardworking citizens of Ohio, the very same citizens you have been elected to represent.

Shivani Deshpande

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<https://www.aamc.org/news/what-gender-affirming-care-your-questions-answered>
[https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X\(21\)00568-1/fulltext#secsectitle0090](https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X(21)00568-1/fulltext#secsectitle0090)