

PDF Version of Testimony for 12.6.23 Opponent hearing on HB 68 in Ohio Senate.

Hi there.

I work and live here in Columbus, Ohio. I've done so for the past 6 years now, and I've been a resident of Ohio all my life. I am writing today, again, to express my opposition to HB68.

I feel like all House legislative initiatives should be under the utmost scrutiny. The Householder conviction has reduced my confidence to near zero. The story keeps moving on with this corruption as Sam Randazzo has now also been federally indicted. (<https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/briefs/former-ohio-public-utilities-chairman-sam-randazzo-indicted-by-federal-grand-jury-for-bribery-embezzlement/>)

There is a clear example of self-serving behavior in the Ohio legislature.

HB68 is self-serving in nature as well. A four-year-old recorded sermon given by Ohio state Rep. Gary Click would defend conversion therapy and suggest that homosexuality and the idea that one can be trans are pushed by Satan in order to undermine the family. In the sermon, he also emphasizes his view that God provided a specific plan for the family. He suggests that homosexuality, trans people, and single-parent homes all break from this plan. He continues to state that Satan works on luring individuals away from the plan, which he says leads to the “crumbling” of society. (<https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2023/05/24/sponsor-of-ohio-trans-youth-health-care-ban-claims-no-religious-motive-sermon-suggests-otherwise/>)

I feel like this is a very strong example of self-serving intent by a lawmaker.

Last session’s HB454 has been resubmitted as HB 68 for this session (<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/hb68>)

It has been accurately reported that Gary Click didn't consult any trans people for his HB454. ([https://urldefense.com/v3/https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2022/07/13/ohio-rep-behind-bill-limiting-transgender-care-had-never-spoken-to-community/";!!AC6e5FAr!1urahCZTEjwQkg-zekH-77lxJM6welFi8WAsMshBlieBAG9zzTgcxtwCR7RTZUxsyIQB3o4dWOaGAwTFXciHAEoAju983Jdvw\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2022/07/13/ohio-rep-behind-bill-limiting-transgender-care-had-never-spoken-to-community/))

With the Householder conviction and the evidence of bills being put forth with no actual impacted community consultation, why would I believe any more thought, care, or concern has been put into HB68?

Gary Click, during proponent testimony on February 16th, said “I was asked to carry this bill by parents and by the Center for Christian Virtue.” when responding to Rep. Beth Liston’s question about who was behind this bill. Minutes later, he went on to say “This bill does not have religious motivations.” (<https://thebuckeyeflame.com/2022/02/17/14-of-the-most-memorable-quotes-from-todays-hearing-on-hb-454-to-ban-trans-youth-from-accessing-medical-care/>). Another example.

If HB68 was not religiously motivated, then it would consider the viewpoints and lived experiences of other religions and cultures. Because it will affect everyone in the state of Ohio, and Ohio is not monotheistic or one homogenous culture.

Life is inherently non-binary. Many cultures have ancient histories of non-binary expression. The Hijra's of India, the Muxes of Oaxaca, and the Mahu of Hawaii, just to name a few.

(<https://rpl.hds.harvard.edu/religion-context/case-studies/gender/third-gender-and-hijras>)

(<https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/muxes-mexico-gender-binary-cec/index.html#:~:text=Muxes%2C%20a%20group%20long%20recognized,deeply%20entrenched%20in%20Western%20society.>)

(<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/hawaii-museum-revisits-history-gender-fluid-healers-rcna37284>).

Humans contain multitudes. Our inner lives are so vast. There is so much creativity and uniqueness within us. We are all so much more than the sum of our parts, including our sexuality and how we express it.

Is it really so hard to believe that someone was born with a body that doesn't match who they are?

The healthiest thing is fully accepting who we are. Name one person that repressing a part of themselves helped.

This bill is proposed as "saving adolescents". That's an inherently antagonistic lens, casting the problem as all these 'legislative saviors' "saving" adolescents. How can we ever actually move forward with love and acceptance when the very language and framing of the current legislature casts seeing life and gender non-binarily as the something to be saved from?

Let's talk about HB68's and HB6's negative synergy for a second.

The Ohio High School Athletic Association and NCAA have policies in place to ensure that sports are fair and accessible to all. I believe the current Ohio High School Athletic Association and NCAA policies are reasonable.

(<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/OtherEligibilityDocs/TransgenderPolicy.pdf>)

Ohio is a step ahead of the most authoritarian states in this union. The current policies on participating in women's sport are reasonably fair when considering Ohio's current level of access to gender affirming youth healthcare.

Studies show that estrogen has a significant impact on the body and its ability to perform physical actions

([https://urldefense.com/v3/https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33648944/;!!AC6e5FAR!1urahCZTEjwQkq-zekH-77lxJM6welFi8Wa-](https://urldefense.com/v3/https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33648944/;!!AC6e5FAR!1urahCZTEjwQkq-zekH-77lxJM6welFi8Wa-sMshBlieBAG9zzTgcxtwCR7RTZUxsylQB3o4dWOaGAwTFXciHAEoAjvseMUbuw$)

[sMshBlieBAG9zzTgcxtwCR7RTZUxsylQB3o4dWOaGAwTFXciHAEoAjvseMUbuw\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33648944/;!!AC6e5FAR!1urahCZTEjwQkq-zekH-77lxJM6welFi8Wa-sMshBlieBAG9zzTgcxtwCR7RTZUxsylQB3o4dWOaGAwTFXciHAEoAjvseMUbuw$)). It's stated in the study that there was some retention of strength capacity, but here's the thing. This study was done on adults. If transgender youth had access to knowledge and care that allowed them to grow into themselves the way that's right for them, by which I mean hormone therapy, puberty blockers, and the other medically accepted safe tools to allow a young person to grow according to their gender identity, then this whole issue would be moot.

Young transgender people provided access to the appropriate medical options would be able to grow in accordance with the already reasonable OHSAA and NCAA policies. There is no need for HB6 or anything like it if trans youth healthcare is protected in Ohio and the OHSAA and NCAA continue to utilize their current policies.

What is HB68 even doing here if not providing the mechanism to eradicate adolescent's ability to express their true selves and interact with people in a meaningfully socially transitioned way?

As a little evidence, from the Buckeye Flame article earlier, "This bill is not about social transitioning," -Rep. Click, around 40 minutes before directly saying that the school-related portion of the bill forcing school staff to out trans youth to parents was because there are schools that support the social transition of trans youth during school hours.'

This bill, and what it opens the doors for, seeks to completely erase transness, queerness, and eventually homosexuality broadly, all together, let alone just from sports or adolescents.

The bill seems to conjecture that if the ability adolescent's have to be their authentic queer selves can be squashed, then there won't be any queer selves.

That simply isn't true.

I can appreciate that the above statement could be categorized and dismissed as hysteric so allow me to point to the fresh Missouri AG Bailey's emergency regulation, effective April 27 and expiring next year, bans transgender people of all ages in Missouri from accessing gender-affirming health care without having exhibited three years of a "medically documented, long-lasting, persistent and intense pattern of gender dysphoria" while also requiring health care providers to ensure annually that a patient's gender identity is not being influenced by social media or their peers. In addition, those seeking access to gender-affirming health care must also be screened for autism, and any existing comorbidities like anxiety and depression must be "treated and resolved" before treatment is administered. (<https://thehill.com/homenews/state-watch/3949521-missouri-ag-issues-emergency-order-restricting-gender-affirming-health-care/#:~:text=Under%20Bailey's%20emergency%20regulation%2C%20which,intense%20pattern%20of%20gender%20dysphoria.%E2%80%9D>)

While I acknowledge that a judge suspended this regulation (<https://apnews.com/article/transgender-health-missouri-lawsuit-fb59ee86b950c0f6ca2f54368f3e4aea>) that doesn't erase the fact it happened or that there are people in legislatures in this country who will continue to push this type of legislation.

The requirements are obviously written by a group that did not consult any actual trans people. Anxiety and depression are direct results of gender dysphoria, notably in places where transness and queerness are painted in an inherently antagonistic lens. (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/gender-dysphoria/#:~:text=Gender%20dysphoria%20is%20a%20term,harmful%20impact%20on%20daily%20life.>)

I do not believe it is appropriate to dismiss the obvious cause and effect of bills like HB68 as slippery-slope fallacy. There is a clear precedent of moving from small transgender youth bans to larger wholesale trans bans. I don't think I need to describe the logical end point of these initiatives, but it certainly isn't acknowledging that trans people are people, and that all people need love, care, support, and acceptance.

Ohio is reasonably a step ahead of the most authoritarian states in this union. The Ohio High School Athletic Association and NCAA policies on participating in women's sport are reasonably fair when considering Ohio's current level of access to trans youth healthcare. They too could become cruel shams of policy depending on things like HB68 coming to pass.

Don't let Ohio become one of the worst places in the union to be a young person, let alone a young trans person. HB68 will make Ohio one of the most dangerous places to be a youth. Every youth is entitled to their own identity, transgender or otherwise.

Please, I demand that you vote no on HB68.

Thank you for your time.