

Dear Senator,

I urge you to vote NO on House Bill 68. It is imperative that we protect critical healthcare for transgender and non-binary youth, while also allowing them to experience sports and activities just like other young people.

Just as all Ohioans deserve access to safe, fact-based healthcare, as well as the right to keep their individual medical needs between them and their providers, Ohioans also deserve the opportunity to build community in activities and sports – not be ostracized for their gender identity.

House Bill 68 not only threatens the privacy of transgender and non-binary youth, but also their ability to seek gender-affirming care. This is a clear example of legislation in search of a problem that does not exist and represents state-sanctioned bullying against an already marginalized population.

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

Individuals, regardless of their age or gender, should have the right to show up as their full, authentic selves, especially in the presence of their healthcare providers. HB 68 would severely damage the well-being of LGBTQ+ youth, while also jeopardizing the trust between providers and patients, putting physicians' medical practices at risk.

Additionally, rather than supporting transgender and gender non-conforming Ohioans, this bill only isolates them further by unnecessarily banning transgender women and girls from participating in sports teams that match their gender identity. Participation in team sports is a common way for children and young adults to build community, and LGBTQ Ohioans have every right to join in these activities.

LGBTQ youth deserve to feel safe and supported by their communities.

I urge you to vote NO on HB 68 to protect the mental and physical health of youth in the LGBTQ+ community.

Sincerely,

Ian Wheatley