

Dear Committee Members:

My name is Dr. Jamie Marich, a resident of Tallmadge, Ohio (originally from Youngstown). I am internationally known as an expert on trauma and dissociation (you can check out my credentials and website at: [www.jamiemarich.com](http://www.jamiemarich.com) and you are free to vet me in whatever way possible). I vehemently oppose the current attempts to override ORC 5122.04 through this very dangerous HB 172, which is no doubt the machinations of "parental rights" advocates.

As a survivor of years-long abuse at the hands of my parents in Youngstown, and now as a clinical trauma specialist, I have strong feelings and equally strong professional concerns about what you are trying to do here. Let me state a few simple facts I can attest from both lived and learned experience:

(a) Parents often do not know what is best for their children, especially when parents have not done their own emotional work or are struggling with active addiction. Dogmatically religious parents can also have problematic interests of indoctrination that can be especially dangerous to LGBTQ+ youth.

(b) Many children do not feel safe to seek therapy or the help that they need, in fear of their parents; early interventions can and do save lives and it is imperative that Ohio minors be able to access services even without their parents' knowledge. There are many dangerous people in our state who are parents and it disgusts me to think that their "rights" would trump those of a suffering child.

(c) I have no doubt that many of the pro-life Republicans who support this bill will argue that children exist as their own entities and have a "right to life" apart from the birthing person who is carrying them. Eliminating ORC 5122.04 takes away the rights of children as autonomous people who have a right to exist apart from the parent carrying them.

I am happy to testify in-person if called upon and am happy to answer any questions from my role as a professional and from my lived experience growing up with abusive parenting where an agenda for indoctrination existed.

Dr. Jamie Marich, LPCC-S