

**Testimony on House Bill 172**

**House Health Committee**

**Allyah Bivens**

**November 19, 2025**

Good morning, Chair Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and Members of the House Health Committee.

My name is Allyah Bivens, and I am a survivor of childhood sexual abuse by my biological father, beginning when I was five years old. I carried that trauma in silence for years because I didn't even understand what had happened to me until I was thirteen.

Growing up, I was never sat down and talked to about sexual abuse. It wasn't until a summer camp I attended briefly discussed the topic that I realized what had been done to me.

Can you imagine finally finding the courage to speak up, only for trusted adults not to believe you? That moment showed me how isolating and hopeless it can feel for a child who is trying to get help.

Before you vote, I ask you to think about the children who are most vulnerable—those living under the same roof as their abuser. Would an abuser ever want that child to have access to therapy or mental health support? Of course not.

That's why I am deeply concerned that House Bill 172 would remove a safe and confidential space for those teens. This bill risks leaving abuse unreported and trauma unaddressed. While I understand the desire for parental involvement, the painful truth is this: not every home is safe, and not every parent is a protector.

For some children, the people who should be advocating for them are the very ones causing harm or silencing them.

Confidential access to therapy doesn't replace parents—it protects children who don't have safe parents to turn to. It gives young people a chance to heal, to find their voice, and to break the silence.

I urge you to protect children in Ohio and vote no on House Bill 172.

Thank you for your time, and thank you for hearing my story.