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Finance Committee
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, Ohio 43215

May 23, 2025

RE: HB96 Proposed State Budget Testimony

Dear Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and fellow respected Committee Members:

My name is Dara Adkison. My pronouns are they/them. And today, I stand before you on behalf of TransOhio—Ohio's first statewide trans-led equity organization; dedicated to protecting and advancing the rights of trans, nonbinary, intersex, and gender nonconforming people in Ohio.

How can we as a state expect to grow and flourish when our budget calls for so much that will make our state worse and less safe. The current proposed budget fosters division, otherization, marginalization, and harms public health instead of addressing the actual needs of Ohio's students, families, elderly and businesses.

Ohioans have been reaching out to all of you and the Governor from all across the state since this budget was proposed. Attached to our testimony is the testimony of over 175 Ohioans from 30+ Counties who are either unable to be here or didn't feel safe in doing so. They plead for you all to listen to their true needs. I will share with you a few examples of those comments:

From Jen in Union County: "At bare minimum, these kinds of policy changes should be proposed as individual bills and heard for public comment."

From Kay in Franklin County: "If the state continues down this path we will lose - economically and by driving young, smart, ambitious, hardworking people away."

From Lauren in Stark County: "Though Governor DeWine claims Ohio is a welcoming state for LGBTQ+ people, in practice this is proved to be untrue again and again. This instance is particularly galling as it tacks on human rights issues to what should be a simple budget bill. I am a queer Ohioan. I am also a worker, a community volunteer, a homeowner, an avid reader and library user. This bill sends a direct message that I am no longer welcome in the state I was born in."

From Rae in Franklin County: "If you pass this bill I will refuse to vote or endorse you or your party next election, you've gone to far. "

From Marin in Hamilton County: “These discriminatory parts of the budget will hurt my family, community, and business.”

From Emily in Montgomery County “Why do you hate your constituents so much? Being inclusive creates a happier community. LGBTQ people are literally just trying to be happy in their lives and this doesn’t hurt anyone. Please stop spreading hate and misinformation.”

From Edith in Wood County “ Discrimination is a blatant disregard of the Federal Constitution guaranteeing life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness by citizens. “

TransOhio has collected the testimony of all these people from across this state, from so many counties, from so many walks of life, you represent all of these these people, please listen to them.

For the good of all Ohioans we urge you to not:

- Defunds youth homeless shelters that serve LGBTQ+ youth and families
- Redefine gender as only 2 sexes and cannot be changed
- Restricts access to all materials in libraries with any LGBTQ+ content to minors
- Bans Pride flags at government buildings
- Restricts Medicaid funding for most gender affirming care
- Bans public buildings from placing menstrual products in men’s restrooms
- Allows higher levels of lead in drinking water
- Cuts BOTH public school funding & library funding
- Weakens collective bargaining & labor protections
- Abolishes the Ohio Elections Commission
- Require photo ID verification for adult websites
- Slashes funding for pediatric cancer research
- Limits access to state contracts for minority-owned businesses’
- Call for a public abortion data dashboard

TransOhio urges this committee to reject this iteration of the state budget, and particularly the lines 757 - 759: “ It is the policy of the state of Ohio to recognize two sexes, male and female. These sexes are not changeable and are grounded in fundamental and incontrovertible reality.” This language is not only factually incorrect, it is dangerous. It contradicts well-established medical, psychological, and legal understanding of sex and gender. It denies the lived reality of thousands of Ohioans, including transgender, nonbinary, and intersex people. And it puts lives at risk.

The idea that sex is binary and immutable is not supported by science. Major medical associations—including the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Endocrine Society—continue to recognize that sex and gender exist on a spectrum. Intersex people, for example, are born with biological traits that do not fit the traditional definitions of male or female. The language of this proposed budget rejects their lived experiences and reality. For many trans and intersex Ohioans, legal and medical transition is

life-saving. The United States Supreme Court’s decision in *Bostock v. Clayton County* confirmed that discrimination against transgender people is a form of sex discrimination. Further, courts across the country—including those in Ohio—have upheld the right of individuals to update identity documents to reflect their correct name and gender. Attempts to erase or deny these rights through budgetary language would almost certainly invite legal challenge, costing Ohio taxpayers both financially and morally. In fact, the language that is taken word for word from an Executive Order is currently the subject of no less than 13 Federal lawsuits.

We urge the committee to remove this language from the budget. It does not belong in fiscal policy, and it does not reflect the values of fairness, science, or compassion that Ohioans deserve.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

TransOhio Board of Directors and Executive Director

What is your name?	Where do you live?	Please share your comment on the proposed budget:
Jen	Union County	This budget discriminates against and harms LGBTQ+ youth. Even beyond that, these policies are harmful for all Ohioans. It attacks the libraries that keep our communities running. Libraries provide services like computer/wifi access, printer access, employment support, and access to so much more. At bare minimum, these kinds of policy changes should be proposed as individual bills and heard for public comment.
Kaitlyn	Butler County	The proposed changes in the state’s budget would be extremely harmful to the LGBTQ+ community, and it discriminates against their basic rights to exist in the state of Ohio. This hatred and discrimination will not be tolerated, and I urge you to not allow these changes to pass in the state budget.
Amy	Franklin	Dear Ohio Senate - Discrimination does not belong in Ohio's budget. Ohio has worked to silence so many through various bills, please don't pass a budget that includes discrimination to marginalized Ohioans. The types of policy changes (included in the budget) should be proposed as individual bills and heard for public comment. Many parts of the budget will hurt my family, my community, and many Ohioans. Please do not allow these discriminatory items to remain in the Ohio budget.
Emmett	Cuyahoga County	This discriminatory budget is a straight up waste of effort into actions that benefit the LGBTQ+ community. Additionally The cutting of public library and education funding is going to screw everyone over in time. Why is important medical research not a priority anymore? This only serves to fuel violence and cruelty. If you have the power to provide any positive change, or any

		pushback towards these blatantly fascist and discriminatory proposals urge you to do so as soon as possible. If the democratic party can at least prove to be useful for something now would be the time to do it.
Micky	Athens	Do not use the budget to sneak in discriminatory policies against LGBTQ+ Ohioans. Do not cut funding for public schools and libraries as education is VITAL for a healthy society. Do not cut funding for PEDIATRIC CANCER RESEARCH (you absolute monsters). Do not attack workers' right to collective bargaining. Do not allow lead in our drinking water. Do not track Ohioans' private health data. Do not lease our public parks to oil companies. Act in the best interests of Ohioans, not lobbyists and big corporations. Each of these issues should, if they must be proposed as legislation, at the very LEAST be proposed as individual bills to be heard for public comment.
Andrew	Franklin County	The restriction of gender affirming care from Medicaid will destroy lives and well-being, and the redefinition of only two sexes is not only discriminatory but biologically inaccurate. The policies proposed in this bill are not only irresponsible but incredibly short-sighted. We the people of Ohio advise that you take more time to listen to all of your constituents and make this state a place where the needs and rights to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness for all are considered and treated with respect.
Breanna	Franklin County	You can't legislate away trans existence, but you can be cruel to people who rely on Medicaid for gender affirming care. This is cruel and unusual, and is blatant discrimination.
Ellie	Franklin County	This budget is bad for Ohioans of color, for students, and for LGBTQ+ Ohioans who love this state and just want to live their lives. Remove discriminatory items from the budget.
Laura	Franklin	Please do not enshrine bigotry and discrimination into Ohio law. This will destroy Ohio families.
Alex	Cuyahoga	Discriminatory language and policies have no place in our state budget. These proposed changes will make it much harder for LGBTQ community members to express themselves and feel safe in our communities. Furthermore, this will decimate the health and wellness of many communities and will create many negative ripples in our state.
Sara	Cuyahoga county	DO NOT PASS THIS EVIL SPIRITED BILL
Isaac	Cuyahoga	This bill is evil, and you should all be ashamed
Sonya	Cuyahoga	Yuck. No thanks.
Kay	Franklin County	It's disappointing to see the contents of SB96. I want my tax dollars and my elected officials working to make lives better for all Ohioans, and cutting education, library, and even cancer research funding certainly will not accomplish this.

		<p>Also, can you just leave LGBTQ+ people alone? Making laws that make life harder for a small percentage of the population is not OK. I am not religious, I don't infringe on your right to express your own religion, but please do not impose your beliefs on me - or on your constituents.</p> <p>If the state continues down this path we will lose - economically and by driving young, smart, ambitious, hardworking people away.</p>
		<p>Hello,</p> <p>I am disappointed to have to write this message. Our state budget should improve services for the people who live in our state. It should seek to bridge the gap between the most vulnerable and the services they need. The budget as it stands will make life worse for Ohioans, especially LGBTQ+ Ohioans. LGBTQ+ people are a beautiful and important part of our state. Removing access to services like homeless shelters and preventing libraries for displaying LGBTQ+ books will only further harm those who are already in pain. LGBTQ+ children will not stop being LGBTQ+ because they didn't see Heartstopper at the library. But they will die if they can't access a homeless shelter.</p>
Mailey	Cuyahoga County	Do better.
Angelo	Cuyahoga	I am fully against this proposed legislation. Absolutely disgusting.
Tiffany Anne	Cuyahoga	Don't hide discrimination laws in budget bills!!!
J	Franklin county	<p>First, these policy changes must be at least proposed as individual bills and heard for public comment.</p> <p>But more importantly, the use of the budget to enforce hate and discrimination amongst our communities is a waste of money and will only harm valuable members of our community, members of my own family, and likely members of your family too.</p> <p>There is absolutely so reason to be spending money on any of these things. Humans are autonomous beings who are meant to love and nourish their bodies and to love and respect one another.</p> <p>Filling our policies with hate and discrimination only causes division, violence, death, and hardship. Is that what you want for your community? Is that what you want for your legacy? To be a part of such a hateful act that causes nothing but pain?</p>
M	Franklin County	Please reconsider adding any of these items to the budget. None of the measures in this budget protect or help children or anyone else in the state. It is not welcoming & not inclusive at all.
Stix	Hamilton County	As a trans constituent, this bill makes it unsafe for me- a born and

		<p>raised Ohioian- to live here. Already, my life feels unsafe. A bill like this has no place in our country. It will only further to make Ohians lives more unsafe and more violent. Make no mistake, this bill encourages violence on trans Ohians lives. And, as public servants, you have a responsibility to all your constituents- even the LGBTQIA members of our community. Please remember that your oath to protect and serve Ohians extends to us, too. And we will hold you to that oath.</p>
Marcia	Williams	<p>Discrimination of any kind is bad. Remember, Jesus is watching you.</p>
Jack	Franklin	<p>These proposed budget changes will deeply impact many members in our communities across the state. For a political party to want to think of the children but restrict funding and aid towards both public schooling and youth homeless shelters is incredibly hypocritical. As someone who also relied on the library system in my youth, it pains me to see a blow being dealt to their funding when a child of the newest generation should be able to receive the benefits of library to enhance themselves towards their future self. As a queer person who knew they were queer from a young age with no access to LGBTQ materials, myself and many others would have benefitted greatly from media to educate ourselves on what was manifesting inside ourselves. Do not rob these children of opportunities to better themselves and better understand themselves. Given the long lasting implications a lot of these policies will have upon our great state they should be made as individual bills for the public themselves to comment upon.</p>
EC	Warren County	<p>Public libraries are an important public resource for people of all ages, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable. We should not be de funding them. And it should be the parents' right to monitor what kind of books their child has access to, not the government's.</p> <p>Furthermore, what does the definition of sex and gender have to do with the state budget? This belongs in a separate piece of legislation.</p>

		<p>Knowing that 74% of Americans support the transgender rights (Data For Progress, Oct. 2024), discrimination against anyone or any community has no place in the Ohio biennial budget process. The proposed State Budget targets the LGBTQ community. It specifically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stops funding youth homeless shelters that help LGBTQ+ youth and families 2. Redefines gender as only 2 sexes and cannot be changed 3. Requires that all materials in libraries with any LGBTQ+ content be made inaccessible to minors 4. Bans Pride flags at government buildings <p>Restricts Medicaid funding for most gender affirming care</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Bans public buildings from placing menstrual products in men's restrooms <p>In the days when I worked at the Statehouse, on the House Judiciary Committee, the focus for the budget was on running the state. Pork-barrel projects were slipped in as line-items by legislators. Rarely if ever were there personal vendettas against specific groups or marginalized groups. The Ohio General Assembly and Governor have made Ohio a police state.</p> <p>I ask that these items be eliminated from the proposed Ohio biennial budget. If they are included in the version submitted by the Ohio General Assembly to Governor DeWine, I respectfully request that he veto each before signing it into law.</p>
Karen I Gallagher	324 Springbrook Dr SE	Sincerely, Karen I Gallagher, M.Ed.
Koryn	Lorain County, OH	<p>As someone who is LGBTQ+, with loved ones who are trans, and who works with people in the LGBTQ+ community as a case manager, I vehemently oppose this bill. I have seen first hand the impacts that lack of access to gender-affirming care can have on people, both youth and adults, and could never encourage support for a bill that allows for such blatant discrimination. The fact that this is even a consideration for Ohio is shameful.</p>

Jill	Mansfield	<p>The current budget bill is full of discrimination and bad ideas. Please remove these items:</p> <p>Stops funding youth homeless shelters that help LGBTQ+ youth and families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Redefines gender as only 2 sexes and cannot be changed ✗ Requires that all materials in libraries with any LGBTQ+ content be made inaccessible to minors ✗ Bans Pride flags at government buildings ✗ Restricts Medicaid funding for most gender affirming care ✗ Bans public buildings from placing menstrual products in men's restrooms ✗ Allows more lead in drinking water ✗ Cuts BOTH public school funding & library funding ✗ Attacks collective bargaining & labor ✗ Abolishes the Ohio Elections Commission ✗ Requires porn photo ID verification ✗ Cuts funding for pediatric cancer research ✗ Limits minority-owned businesses' access to state contracts ✗ Calls for a public abortion data dashboard ✗ Allows for leasing of public parks to private oil and gas companies <p>I disagree with all of them. Do not pass if still included.</p>
Stephanie Key	Greene, Co	<p>Stop the discrimination! These programs and resources are vital for our LGBTQ+ youth and community. Stay out of our personal lives. Instead provide safety and equality for all Ohioans!!</p>
Rae	Franklin	<p>If you pass this bill I will refuse to vote or endorse you or your party next election, you've gone to far. This proposed budget benefits a small margin of the Ohio populace and will have many negative public health effects as well as lowered morale. Please block this bill.</p>
Derek	Franklin	<p>These are not budget issues. The Ohio legislature treating them as such short circuits representative democracy. These issues should be individual bills subject to public comments and official testimony.</p>
Edith	Wood County	<p>Discrimination is a blatant disregard of the Federal Constitution guaranteeing life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness by citizens. Seeking to discriminate based on individual qualities is also a violation of the constitution. Trans people's identity of themselves and how they pursue their lives violates no other law than ones that are made against them after the fact. It is no different than discrimination against race, or religion. Let trans people live their lives as they are.</p>
Ashton	Lucas County	<p>Less than a month ago, Governor Dewine stated that he wanted Ohio to be a state that was for everyone, for Ohio to be seen as a welcoming state. The proposed changes to restrict LGBTQ+ advocacy, safety, and information is a direct violation of that.</p>

		<p>Science has proven that there are more than two sexes, science has proven that gender affirming care has a less than 1% regret rate which is lower than plastic surgery like breast augmentation. Allowing children to see that there is diversity in the world does not harm them, it opens their minds to the possibilities that not everyone lives like they do or that they might find a place in the world where they fit in more comfortably. The changes proposed to restrict acceptance and safety for those in the LGBTQ+ will only cause harm. You will ostracize an already vulnerable community, and you'll push more people to leave Ohio. Ohio population numbers are already in a decline, students are already turning away attending colleges in Ohio thanks to the DEI restrictions implemented by the state government. I just bought a house here in Ohio a year ago and I'm already considering moving to Michigan since my rights and the rights of my future children are being restricted and reduced with each passing bill. How is this the land of the free when you're constantly censoring people within the community? How can Ohio be a welcoming place for people when it's constantly targeting the LGBTQ+ community, the poor, and other vulnerable members of our community? Ohio isn't just for the white-straight-christian american. Ohio and America is supposed to be for all. Liberty and Justice for All. Continuing to pass these dangerous bills will only continue to work against that and aid the view that Ohio is becoming more and more in line with Nazi rhetoric and views. Is that what you want Ohio to be known for? Is that what Jesus would want? Proposed budget HB96 is going to ruin Ohio.</p>
Karin	Cuyahoga	<p>My concerns are no funding for lead free water to prevent brain damage to children is unconscionable. Funding for pediatric cancer research is an abomination. Rights for our LGBTQ community should be upheld.</p>
B	Montgomery	<p>There are several policy changes added to the budget that should be proposed as individual bills. This is not democracy and there is a large amount of discrimination against people the state should be welcoming towards. Please refuse to pass this budget until all policy changes regarding gender discrimination are removed. In particular I find it appalling that gender is redefined as only 2 sexes as this is not biological truth. There are many policy changes here that will endanger the public and turn away business from Ohio. We can do better and we should be supporting our LGBTQ+ Ohioans not forcing them to consider leaving our state due to such draconian measures as are being hidden in what should only be a budget proposal. Additionally cutting public school funding and library funding is ridiculous as these measures are voted on in individual counties of the state. This is government overreach at its finest and several things are tacked on into the budget because they would not be able to</p>

		survive on their own as separate bills. Please vote this down and draw up a true budget that does not harm Ohio.
Priscilla Shields	Cuyahoga County	Psychiatrists recognize a spectrum of gender identities, extending beyond the traditional binary of male and female. They acknowledge that individuals may identify as cisgender (matching their assigned sex at birth), transgender (not matching their assigned sex), or nonbinary (identifying as neither, both, or somewhere in between). Examples of nonbinary identities include genderfluid, genderqueer, and agender. To exclude funding of services for any citizen because of their gender is discriminatory and unconstitutional. I have many friends and relatives who do not fit your definition of gender and I can assure you they are all wonderful people and do not deserve to be marginalized.
Asher	6613 w Bancroft street	Don't block anything we all a person and don't like to be judged just because we feel we different then the way we were born
Steve	Hamilton County	Discrimination should not be in a budget. No lead in drinking water. We will not accept these actions. We will vote you out.
Justin	Hamilton	There is no reason for any of this. Everyone deserves to be safe, have access to education, health and medical resources and care etc. we are all human and deserve to have the same access to healthcare, assistance in living, food. The right to be who you are, identify how ever you want. It doesn't affect the needs of anyone.
Indica	Montgomery County, Dayton	Completely overreach of power, just like the governor putting his own son into the Supreme Court of Ohio. I thought republicans didn't want government interfering? Complete bs if you're reading this go fuck yourself.
Sarah Martin	Hamilton County	DISCRIMINATION HAS NO PLACE IN THE OHIO BUDGET!!! THIS IS DANGEROUS AND IT IS KILLING PEOPLE AND THEIR SAFTEY!!!
Al	Hamilton County	While these discriminations are unnecessary and cruel by themselves, trying to slip them into a state budget where they have no place at all is an extra insult. If you don't think these measures could pass on their own merit, then you have no call to be pushing them. Stating that 'there are only two genders that can't switch' as if it is a clear and obvious fact does not actually make it a fact, which it scientifically is not. Please stop trying to hurt people just trying to live their lives. There's no call for it, and it reveals a propensity for cruelty that no one should be facing from the government of their state. It will cause people to leave the state, one way or another.
Matt	Hamilton	This is simply unacceptable. Many of you claim to be Christian. Jesus said love thy neighbor as thyself. Instead you thumb your nose at Him and act in the opposite way, trying to erase friends,

		family, and community members. Absolutely disgraceful.
Lauren	Warren County	Discrimination doesn't belong in the Ohio State Budget HB96. Our public libraries are essential in our community and do not need to discriminate against any material. It is up to the reader and the reader's parents on what one reads. Not our government. Also as a nonbinary parent, discrimination of any kind toward to the LGBTQIA+ community is distressing and will put our community in direct harm while also causing continued hate. I want a world where my child and I can live in peace to be ourselves no matter what that looks like. We are not hurting ANYBODY. Please stand up for us. To add on to my issues with this, I am alive today because of abortion. My mother had multiples and some of them were dying in her womb. If she didn't have a safe abortion with some of the fetuses, I would not be alive. The life saving abortion saved my twin sister and I. Please consider me and my family when creating laws for Ohio. Thank you.
Chris	Hamilton	The library is a vital part of or cities, counties and states. LGBTQ people exist. They are humans just like cisgender and straight people. Pretending as if they don't exist will not keep them from existing, but will put a large population at risk. We are coming to a boiling point where everyone's constitutional rights are being petitioned. Be a part of the solution, not the problem.
Drew	Butler county	Please let me live my life and have my privacy and freedom
Jacobee	Greene	This vilification of trans people is at best a waste of taxpayer dollars and energy that our representatives could spend on actually improving their constituents' quality of life. At worst, it is an unnecessary attack on a community that has never harmed anyone by merely existing.
Angela	Hamilton	Elected officials are meant to protect our freedoms - not restrict them. Any attempt to infringe on our rights is a betrayal of the oath you took to serve the people.
Mackenzie Hall	979 Harkin dr cincinnati, oh 45240	This is straight up discrimination.
Angela Kaesheimer	Kenton County, KY	I may not live in Ohio, but I work there and pay taxes for both my job there and the city that I work in. You can't claim to represent all your constituents or have their best interests at heart when you create policies that put them in harm's way! These policy changes will have direct negative consequences on the citizens you claim to care about. The data is there and you're refusing to accept it. Take care of your voters and fellow Ohioans and stop being a coward catering to bullies and bigots.
Vicki Prunty	Wayne	The entire reason we started doing these things is because trans people were dying at an astronomical rate. The only reason you would want to change course is because you want to see trans

		people die. If that's the case then maybe you should just say that. Instead of pretending that you care about any of us.
Jacquelyn	Hamilton county	Stop using the budget to escape goat marginalized people and pander to special interests, the budget has not where legislation on these things belong.
Mica	Warren County	Discrimination has no place in the Ohio budget! These kinds of policy changes must be at least proposed as individual bills and heard for public comment. These parts of the budget will hurt my family, my community, and my career!
Paige	Marion County	<p>Up until I was about 11, the only instances of LGBT people I ever saw were on TV in comedies that my parents watched. They were portrayed as gross, weird freaks who only cared about sex. Naturally when you see that you don't even realize that liking other girls is something you can do in earnest because you've only ever seen it played for laughs, or meant to make an audience cringe. For much of my life I bottled up that feeling, which I know is what people who support these ideas want, and I never want any other person regardless of their age to have to do that. I'm 21 now and I've met so many wonderful people of all ages with rich inner lives and hopes and dreams and they just happen to be gay or trans or are exploring that aspect of themselves and trying to come to a conclusion. Isn't that something everyone should be able to strive for? To be able to dream and accomplish and love and express themselves as they are without judgment?</p> <p>It's my understanding that a lot of people who are not in support of LGBTQ+ rights are doing it "for the children." Even ignoring the fact that this is clearly a lie, how does stripping youth homeless shelters and restricting minors from reading books that happen to have gay people in them help children? Do you seriously want people to believe that abandoning homeless children because some of them happen to be queer is helping them? Does it help LGBTQ+ kids to hide any evidence that they exist? Does any of this help literally anyone? Not only that, but talking about "protecting children" and then cutting school funding and allowing more lead in drinking water is astoundingly hypocritical. Talking about "protecting children" and then cutting funding for pediatric cancer research and allowing private companies to lease public parks where children play and laugh and grow is astoundingly hypocritical. Maybe you as politicians just don't care about the hypocrisy, and nobody can stop you, you're in charge of your own actions. However, at the very least if you don't care about actually helping people, care about your public image. I highly doubt most parents would enjoy you stripping funding meant for their kids because you thought LGBT people were gross.</p>

Caleb	Steubenville	The state budget should never be used as a tool to further discrimination against the communities that the state is made up of. Continuing the harmful and oppressive discourse for limiting gay and transgender individuals in what they are allowed to do while simply existing is wrong and does not serve our state. Cutting funding for public community services such as libraries and requiring greater government oversight of private medical information and choices is not what your constituents want or require to thrive.
Marin Day	Hamilton	Discrimination has no place in the Ohio budget! These kinds of policy changes must be at least proposed as individual bills and heard for public comment. These discriminatory parts of the budget will hurt my family, community, and business.
Ash	Hamilton county	This discrimination will be harmful and damaging to myself, my friends, and family. This discrimination will isolate us from our right to exist and freedom in this country. Please reconsider and think above your peers when voting as this puts lives at risk.
Abigail	Akron	I find it ridiculous that a budget bill has so much to do with gender and bathrooms. Those don't belong in a budget bill but separate bills that all deserve their own hearings
Chaelsie	Trumbull	Please don't make Ohio a hateful place for our trans community to live. They just want to exist in peace. Nothing more, nothing less. Leave them be! Good people do not target vulnerable minorities!
Erica	Butler County	I am a transgender adult trying to live my life in peace. I work full time, pay taxes, vote, raise a family, and have never been a criminal. The proposed Ohio state budget is full of discriminatory items designed to make my life even harder than it already is for no reason other than cruelty. I implore you to reject all legislation designed to harm trans people.

Amanda	Summit County	<p>Dear Members of the Ohio Senate,</p> <p>I am writing to express my profound concern and opposition to the discriminatory provisions embedded within Ohio's HB 96. As a representative of an organization dedicated to supporting and empowering our community, I witness firsthand the devastating impact that such legislation will have on the lives of vulnerable individuals and families.</p> <p>The proposed state budget, under HB 96, contains measures that directly undermine the fundamental human rights and well-being of LGBTQ+ individuals, particularly our youth. Specifically, I urge you to reconsider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Defunding youth homeless shelters that serve LGBTQ+ youth and families: This action will leave already marginalized young people without essential support and safety nets. These shelters provide crucial resources and safe spaces, and their defunding will exacerbate the crisis of youth homelessness within the LGBTQ+ community. -Redefining gender and denying gender affirming care: Redefining gender as only two sexes and restricting Medicaid funding for gender affirming care denies individuals their basic human rights and access to necessary medical treatment. This will have severe negative consequences for the mental and physical health of transgender individuals. -Restricting access to LGBTQ+ content in libraries: Limiting access to information and resources that reflect the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals creates a hostile and discriminatory environment. Libraries should be spaces of inclusion and access for all. -Banning Pride flags at government buildings: This symbolic act of exclusion sends a clear message that LGBTQ+ individuals are not welcome or valued by their government. -Denying menstrual products in mens bathrooms: This action creates unneeded discrimination and a health risk for any person who may need them. Additionally, sometimes men may have a daughter with them who is experiencing a menstrual cycle and needs products while out in the community. Increasing accessibility to necessary feminine health products is crucial. <p>Furthermore, the inclusion of other harmful provisions, such as increased lead in drinking water, cuts to public school and library funding, and limitations on minority-owned business access,</p>
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		<p>demonstrates a disregard for the well-being of all Ohioans. These policies will disproportionately affect marginalized communities and create further inequities within our state.</p> <p>These policy changes should be proposed as individual bills that have public comments. The inclusion of these items in a nearly 5000 page budget bill is a way to sneak these harmful policies into law.</p> <p>I implore you to uphold the principles of equality, justice, and human dignity. I urge you to remove these discriminatory provisions from HB 96 and instead prioritize policies that promote inclusivity and protect the rights of all Ohio residents.</p>
Samantha	Franklin county	You're driving people out of this state
Ellie	Butler County	<p>Trans rights or human rights. Gender affirming care is healthcare. The small percentage of people that are transgender are not harming the rest of ohio's citizens. Just let them live in peace and be well. It doesn't matter who someone loves, nor does it matter what they do in the privacy of their own home. Stop making queer people feel like criminals.</p>
Elijah	Franklin County	<p>To the representative who reads my message:</p> <p>I will not stand for HB96 to be legislated. My congregation will not stand for this. People like me who supported YOU last election will be harmed by this bill. My friends and family will be harmed by this bill.</p> <p>This bill is violent.</p> <p>If you vote for this insane bill, my congregation will hold you accountable. We will protest everywhere you are. And you will never serve our community again.</p> <p>And someday, God will hold you RESPONSIBLE for all the evil & hate you bring into this world.</p>
Marnie	Franklin County	<p>Discrimination does not belong in the budget! Policy changes should be introduced as individual bills so the peoples' voices can be heard and proper steps taken to pass or fail. Trying to sneak anti-LGBTQ+ policies into the budget without due process is underhanded and wrong. You KNOW the majority of citizens would oppose many if not all of these terrible takes. This is not to even mention all the other awful ideas in the proposed budget. This budget as proposed must NOT pass, and we the people call on Dewine to make a stand and veto it if it gets to his desk!</p>

Nancy	Athens	<p>Dear Representative Don Jones,</p> <p>My name is Nancy, and I've been living in your district for over 40 years. I've never written in to my representative before. But now I want you to hear my story.</p> <p>My niece is trans. Her name is Stella. Stella's parents beat her so badly that the school counselor noticed and reported neglect. Stella's CPS case was dismissed, and she had to run away when she was 13 years old just to avoid being beaten in her own home. She has told me many times that she only survived homelessness because of the Safe and Supported project in Cincinnati. That program is how she was able to go to the same school until I reached out and had her move in with me.</p> <p>I share this with you, because HB96 aims to take funding away from programs like the one that saved her life. Your views on trans people might be different from mine. But I think it's a tragedy that any child would ever be forced to live on the street because of their gender identity. And I know from Stella's horror stories, that taking away programs like this will put children in danger. And that is more important than whatever you or I believe.</p> <p>You can't allow this to pass. I'm begging you to remember; protecting kids is our job. It's one of the only jobs we have that actually matters.</p> <p>Please vote against HB96.</p> <p>Best regards, Nancy</p>
Corinne	Delaware County	<p>Hello. I'm Corinne, a transgender senior at Dublin Jerome High School who is about to graduate, and I am terrified for my future. I assume the justification for banning LGBTQ+ library books to minors, defunding homeless shelters that serve queer youth, etc. is that you're trying to protect your kids, and I am truly empathetic to that cause. I think that, as lawmakers, you really can make a better, safer world for not just your kids, but for children across the state of Ohio. However, your methods are misguided - these measures will only hurt us, gay and straight alike. From someone on the precipice of adulthood, I'd like to review what you are proposing in this budget and see if they truly do protect the youth of Ohio.</p> <p>Banning books and defunding public services like libraries will not help children at all. The library system is a quintessential fixture for so many Ohioans - it's a place where, even if their home</p>

	<p>environment is not ideal, they can study, read, use the internet, print and copy important documents, and enjoy free air conditioning and heating. These are necessities for so many people who may not have all of these luxuries at their homes. Even if their home environment is serviceable, students love having a second space to hang out and do homework - every single day, you can go to the Dublin branch of the Columbus Metropolitan Library and witness dozens of students from Jerome, Coffman, and Scioto utilizing the amenities provided to them by public funding to excel in high school and beyond. Defunding these institutions and limiting access to literature is going to hurt every single child who uses libraries. Going further, state funded public schools are also a necessity, especially in poorer areas like downtown Columbus. Dublin and other suburbs will be fine - we have enough local resources already - but you need to fund the education of your poorest citizens if you want a fair society, especially in a time where federal funding for education is being threatened so much. Equally important to schools are homeless shelters for youth, which are some of the most worthwhile investments you can make. They help people who would otherwise be freezing out on the streets - where police officers and citizens may then discriminate against them. Defunding them for supporting a specific chunk of the population is, to put it bluntly, evil. Do you want these children, with nowhere else to go, to live on the streets, to beg for money and food, to be harassed by passers-by, just because they are gay or trans? Additionally, even if you don't agree with what is said in books written by queer authors, silencing their voices is contrary to the principles of the United States - the banning of literature is a telltale sign of a government becoming fascist, limiting free speech and prohibiting their citizens from accessing certain topics that go against the will of those in power. Please, do not fall into these traps.</p> <p>Finally, on a personal note, I'm begging you to not cut Medicaid funding for gender-affirming care. I know this is another attempt to protect children, but kids under 16 who are struggling with their identities are only ever given hormone blockers, which have temporary and completely reversible effects. Those 16 or over can acquire hormones - at least before the recent executive orders and HB 68 - but it is a grueling, expensive, long process. I assure you, those trying to make it through the transgender health system are dedicated to transitioning, and the likelihood of them regretting their decision is incredibly low. If they do end up detransitioning, hormones at a low dose do not change the body dramatically in the first few months. In fact, the regret rate for gender affirming surgeries is <1%, and to remind you, these can only be accessed by adults after a long and expensive process. I</p>
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		<p>understand this is all part of a bigger culture war, and I doubt my words will really sway anyone who reads this, but I feel that it's my duty to share with you how essential gender-affirming care is for those with gender dysphoria. For us, it's the only cure for a horrible condition, one which makes you despise your very being. Don't make it worse - I am transgender, and nothing you do will stop me from being transgender.</p> <p>I hope you try to understand my criticisms. I hope you don't just dismiss us. Please, listen to your citizens, and don't pass this budget.</p>
Wesley Chivington	223 W Garland Ave Fairborn Ohio 45324	<p>Once again, the majority of Ohio legislators have shown that they do not represent the majority of Ohioans. Yet again, legislators that claim to love small government and the rights of parents strip family's of personal decision making and expand government overreach. I beg of you to practice what you preach. Leave public health decisions to the experts.</p>
Ry	Wood county	<p>I urge you not to pass a budget with discriminatory content snuck in. Doing an end run around legislation that would be found unconstitutional is reprehensible, beyond the generally reprehensible nature of trying to limit the rights of a small portion of the population who aren't hurting anyone. Additionally, cutting school and library funding when those public institutions are already being hit hard by federal cuts would undermine the ability of Ohioans to succeed in their lives. It's imperative that libraries and schools (and all its citizens) be supported by the state so that the state of Ohio can stand a chance of being a decent place to live, work, and raise a family regardless of what is happening in Washington DC.</p>
Amanda	Hamilton	<p>I didn't repeat with liberty and justice for ALL every day of my elementary school education when pledging allegiance to grow up and demand anything less from my government and/or representatives. Fund libraries, shelters, protect all constituents equally, respect the intrinsic dignity of the full spectrum of humanity.</p>
Dom	U.S.A.	<p>These policies are blatantly discriminatory and restrict true freedom of speech and expression. Not only trans folks need tampons in men's restrooms but what about intersex individuals? These proposed bills will do more harm than good and further alienate those from our society who have already struggled through so much. Government should be hands off libraries and restrooms, period. "Small government" should mean freedom for trans and queer people in our community, not more government policing us.</p>
Emily B	Hamilton County, OH	<p>Please DO NOT kowtow to this presidential administration's attacks on, and disregard for, the Constitution, and please don't</p>

		undo the progress our country has made in recognizing that all women, all children, people of all races, varied abilities, religions, and different sexual orientations have the right to dignity, respect, and access to education, including and especially free access to library resources that speak to their individual needs. We need the state budget to support all of its constituents, not just the special interests of those with the most money.
Colleen	Hamilton County	These proposed policy changes do not reflect the opinion of the majority of Ohioans and are NOT in the best interests of the citizens you have been sworn to serve. You have a duty to respect the rights and freedoms of ALL Ohioans.
Travis	Hamilton County	Please just let trans people live their lives. They just want to be.
Lilith	Summit county	I am a 19 year old trans woman who was born and raised in Ohio, I have prided myself through the past few years of anti trans legislation for living in what I wrongfully assumed to be one of the "safer" red states. That was until this budget was introduced, redefining gender as being only defined by physical sex is extremely damaging to the trans community as well as the intersex community and I will NOT be erased! Governor Dewine, if you care about your constituents you will NOT allow this to pass, one of the only reasons that I am alive today is being supported by my family in my gender identity and having access to life saving gender affirming healthcare. I am proud to be an Ohioan, please allow me to stay proud by saying no to HB 96 please keep Ohio safe for trans people of all ages.
Erin	Hamilton County	It is vitally important that you vote against HB96. I am appalled at the idea that my taxes could be used to fund, implement, and normalize blatant hatred and discrimination in Ohio. The war on LGBTQ+ communities in this country is inhumane, in direct opposition to the idea of liberty and justice for all, and frankly humiliating, to think that anyone can believe that this kind of discrimination is okay. The LGBTQ+-oppressive measures posed in HB96 are a threat to so many who just wish to live and love as friends and neighbors. This war is being waged under the guise of protecting women's rights and children's safety, but the result will be as far from these ideals as it is possible to be. The proposed budget will endanger countless people's health and safety, cut valuable school and library resources, violate Ohioans' privacies, and generally injure democracy in our state and nation. Opposing this bill is not optional. It is your duty.

Gwen	Butler	<p>I as a native Ohioan think that any budget bill that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Stops funding youth homeless shelters that help LGBTQ+ youth and families * Redefines gender as only 2 sexes and cannot be changed *Requires that all materials in libraries with any LGBTQ+ content be made inaccessible to minors * Bans Pride flags at government buildings <p>Restricts Medicaid funding for most gender affirming care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Bans public buildings from placing menstrual products in men's restroom <p>Is discriminatory and has absolutely no place in ohio law</p>
Brittany	Hamilton county	<p>A government should represent the interests of all of its constituents, not just those with large amounts of wealth and certainly not those of private companies. Ohio deserves better than to have our libraries and schools dessimated. Ohioans deserve to not be discriminated against. How can our own leaders be confused about the perception of this state as unwelcoming, when they are the ones protecting hate and legislating away personal choice. This proposal is draconian, cruel, and will harm Ohio.</p>
Eli Morbid	Belmont	stop this please
Judy	Greene County	<p>Please veto this bill! We know there are no ONLY two genders. Lgbtq folks are already being attacked. Lgbtq kids are at such a greater risk of bullying and suicide. Keeping support and education in place for them helps us all!</p>
Dianne	Hamilton	I don't support this. It absolutely has no place in a budget.
Kate	United States	<p>More lead in water and less rights for Ohioans. Give me a fucking break. Eventually the people will rise up.</p>
Roxie	Kenton	<p>This proposal is ridiculous and will only hurt the people in this region.</p>
Tasha	Hamilton County	Hate has no home here!
Crystal	Cuyahoga	<p>I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 96. While I understand the importance of efficient governance and fiscal responsibility, I believe this bill contains provisions that undermine democratic principles, perpetuate discriminatory practices, and jeopardize public health.</p> <p>This bill includes provisions that disproportionately harm marginalized communities, including LGBTQ+ individuals. By restricting access to LGBTQ+ materials in public libraries, criminalizing support for transgender youth, and defining gender in narrow, exclusionary terms, the bill fosters an environment of censorship and discrimination. These measures threaten the mental health and well-being of vulnerable populations, particularly young people, and undermine the principles of equality and inclusion that Ohioans value.</p>

		<p>The inclusion of an abortion dashboard is another deeply troubling aspect of this bill. Such a measure risks violating patient privacy and could be used to stigmatize individuals seeking reproductive healthcare. Public health policies should prioritize the safety, dignity, and autonomy of all individuals, rather than imposing invasive and punitive measures.</p> <p>Furthermore, the inclusion of these significant changes within a broader budget bill, without proper debate or consultation with stakeholders, is deeply concerning. This approach limits public awareness and input on matters that directly impact the integrity of our justice system, the rights of marginalized communities, and the trust Ohioans place in their government.</p>
Allen	Franklin County	<p>In an effort to speak up for the safety and support of those I love and care for, as well as my fellow Ohio residents at large, I am writing today to urge the senate to remove discrimination from the state budget. Or, at the very least, these kinds of policy changes must be proposed as individual bills and heard for public comment.</p> <p>HB96 contains explicit discrimination against those of the LGBTQ+ population. As an Ohio resident with several family members and friends who belong to this population, this is a very important matter to me. And from what I can tell, people all across the state share my deep concerns.</p> <p>The discrimination in HB96 includes a proposal to stop funding youth homeless shelters that help LGBTQ+ youth and families access the resources they need to stay housed and off the streets, protecting them from harsh weather and other hazards to their health and well-being. It also includes a proposal to redefine gender as only "two sexes" which could severely impair countless individuals' ability to receive crucial medical care or even broader services depending on how this unspecified and pointless redefinition is enforced. It would require that all books in libraries with any LGBTQ+ content be made inaccessible to minors, a blatant and shameful form of discrimination that endangers the health and education of all youth. It would ban pride flags at government buildings, an unproductive act of suppression of recognition for marginalized populations. It would restrict Medicaid funding for most gender affirming care, a cruel and unjust punishment thrust upon people of whom experience some of the most significant rates of suicidal ideation when restricted from accessing this crucial form of health care, of which the patients themselves along with their highly educated and licensed providers consistently support the funding of. It would also ban public buildings from placing menstrual products in men's restrooms, which in my honest opinion is frankly ridiculous. No one group of just a few people should be putting restrictions on</p>

		<p>which kinds of simple medical supplies can be stocked and accessed by civilians in public bathrooms. Menstrual products do no harm to anyone, while easier access to them helps people stay clean and healthy.</p> <p>I once again urge the senate to remove discrimination from the state budget, and I thank them for their time spent reading this letter which I have written from a place of deep concern about the lives of my trans and queer loved ones, were these discriminatory policies to be enforced.</p>
Susan Newman	1625 McMurtrie Loop The Villages, FL 34763	I have a trans daughter living in Ohio. I feel very concerned about this proposed budget and discriminatory measures towards the trans community.
Amy	Franklin	<p>I will NEVER support any act of discrimination towards ANY individual! Stop being afraid to do what is RIGHT!!! You think abortion is wrong, but how about trans youth killing themselves because they feel scared, alone, persecuted?! A CHILD!!!!</p> <p>Everyone deserves protection.</p>
Ollie	Wilmington Ohio	Please do not take away people's rights. Please acknowledge and be mindful to your oath to the constitution. Please include everyone when it comes to freedom. Or else, you make it so that we are not the land of the free.
Cathy	Lake	First amendment rights, rights for LGBTQ, cuts to public school and library funding... tearing down our state piece by piece brick by brick. Ohio, you are better than this..
Kelly Glover	Hamilton	<p>Transgender people are just trying to live their lives. Their decisions and genitalia are a personal matter and the vast majority of rape and sexual assault is carried out by cis-gendered individuals. The amount of transgender individuals having surgery underage is less than 1% of all transgender individuals, and is only done with therapy, doctor consultation, and parental permission. Let's stop this witchhunt and focus on real issues harming Americans, like inflation and harmful tariffs.</p> <p>Taking away suicide hotlines and homeless shelters for LGBTQ people doesn't magically make LGBTQ people go away, it only leads to more suicides and vulnerable youth on the streets.</p> <p>Regarding sex as binary is scientifically inaccurate, even if you don't agree with transgender individuals, because it erases intersex people.</p> <p>What kind a person would abolish pediatric Cancer Care for children, I can't even believe I have to comment on that.</p> <p>Menstrual products in men's bathrooms is not just for transgender</p>

		<p>men, but many times this bathrooms are used at sporting events when there are two girls teams, or in the case that an event has more women than men and the men's room needs to be used for additional women. Taking menstrual products out of men's bathrooms also punishes cisgender women.</p> <p>Again, who exactly in the right mind, would want to propose something that would lead to more lead in Ohio's drinking water?</p> <p>I implore you, and anyone with common sense, to stop these funding legislation that only harms people living in our great state.</p>
Meghan	West Chester Ohio	This bill is unduly harsh and the provisions have no place in a budget bill.
Farida	Wood County	We need policies that build bridges and promote goodwill- not policies that further divide citizens.
James	Hamilton co	With the disproportionately high risk of suicide for queer youth, access to affirming information can literally kill people children.
Shan Kesling	Lucas county	This isn't what we want! This isn't the Ohio that I chose to live in! Trans rights are human rights!
Stephen	Butler	Passing discriminatory laws against the LGBTQIA community does nothing to help Ohioans. These acts are senseless, unpopular, and designed to be weapons used against minority groups that only wish to have the same rights as is guaranteed under the Constitution of the United States. I urge you to vote no against HB96 and stop hateful and unnecessary laws from passing in Ohio. You were elected to serve the people, and studies have shown that anti-LGBTQIA laws are unpopular, and often unconstitutional. Please think of all Ohioans when you decide which bills become laws.
Lyn	Franklin	If you push this bill, kids will die, a lot of them by their own hand. I expect better from you people.
Riley	Cheviot Ohio, Hamilton County	<p>Discrimination will only harm your constituents. I work in Conservation education and most if not all of these extreme changes will destroy what I'm doing to live and exist in our beautiful state. Cutting library funding will harm the resources I need to teach this next generation of Ohioans of the importance of saving our natural resources. Not only will these measures affect my professional life but also my personal life as a nonbinary citizen. Cutting trans healthcare from Medicaid will kill me. My body does not produce the hormones I need to live and need them medically replaced.</p> <p>Please reconsider these extreme measures.</p>
Emily	Montgomery County	Why do you hate your constituents so much? Being inclusive creates a happier community. LGBTQ people are literally just trying to be happy in their lives and this doesn't hurt anyone.

		Please stop spreading hate and misinformation.
Frances Whited	Wayne County	I'm appalled that the Ohio senate is trying to avoid public comment by cramming a bunch of hate-filled proposals in the budget bill. I truly do not understand the hate for LGBTQ. The only thing this misguided efforts will accomplish is to make a vulnerable population even more vulnerable. The entire trans population of Ohio constitutes about 6%. Why all these directives aimed at such a small number of people??!! Do we not have bigger problems to worry about? Trans people, like everyone else, just want to live their lives in peace. The budget should not contain ANY policies that discriminate. Governor DeWine said he wanted to state to be seen as welcoming to everyone. Is this the way to send that message?
Cassandra	Clermont county	STOP THIS SHIT
Jaime	Hamilton County	I greatly oppose these budget proposals. I work with children and I see many of these cuts and restrictions as detrimental to their developmental. In my work, I do my best to work in community with parents to create the most supportive environment possible for children. This budget proposals cut things that create these supportive environments, like homeless shelters, medical funding, school funding, and library funding. These cuts are not ways to actually support children. They are cuts to support systems for our state's most vulnerable of children.
Betsy	Hamilton County	Discrimination doesn't belong in Ohio!
Elizabeth	Hamilton County	The proposed state budget is an attack on Ohio citizens, especially those who rely on the government the most and who have the greatest need. Government should be the foundation of a strong society and Ohio's government has been weakening our Ohio society year after year for over a decade. Do not allow this proposal to take effect and do damage and harm to millions of Ohioans, many of whom are children who don't have a vote to represent their wishes but who will pay the steepest price for these decisions.
Anita	Hamilton County	Don't do this!
Adam	Private	The "pro-life" party until those lives aren't being lived the way you want. It is so hateful and shameful to discriminate against such a small percentage of the population who is simply begging for the right to exist in peace. Please veto this, or Ohio's will become even more unsafe for so many people who already face discrimination and hatred every day.
Susan (she, her)	Montgomery	Discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community does not belong in Ohio's state budget! Please vote against HB 96! Thank you!
Susan (she, her)	Montgomery	Discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community does not belong in Ohio's state budget! Please vote against HB 96! Thank you!

Melody	Hamilton	Trans and gay folks deserve to live peacefully anywhere, and it's absolutely vile and disgusting to target an entire group that only makes up 1% of the population. Passing legislation like this promotes violence.
Tyler	Franklin County	Teachers in Ohio are already struggling to provide for our students. This bill would make it even harder for us to do our jobs.
Melissa	Montgomery County	House Bill 96 includes discriminatory language against real people in Ohio. This cannot stand. Ohio is known for being a state of kind, conscientious people, and as one of them, I will not stand behind anyone who encourages discrimination against any person. Vote NO on HB 96. It hurts good Ohioans.
Krystofer	Lucas county	I never wanted to be different from anyone, I never wanted to stand out. I only ever wanted to be normal. Hormone replacement therapy is the only way I've feel normal in my entire life of trying to live conservatively and be what others want. I hope that you can try to think about the pain that comes from having a brain that's wired in the womb to be different from your biological sex. It's not about destroying societal structure, it's not even always about authenticity (even though that's the goal), it's just about being able to exist and feel normal like everyone else who seem to naturally be able to be happy and content and love themselves easier than you because of something out of your control. Nobody asks to be born differently, and the ultimate goal is usually to feel normal, not to stand out. Refusing access to care makes us have to stand out whether we want to or not.
Lauren Meszaros	Stark County	I am writing in opposition to the discriminatory add-ons to the state budget, particularly with regards to the LGBTQ+ community. Though Governor DeWine claims Ohio is a welcoming state for LGBTQ+ people, in practice this is proved to be untrue again and again. This instance is particularly galling as it tacks on human rights issues to what should be a simple budget bill. I am a queer Ohioan. I am also a worker, a community volunteer, a homeowner, an avid reader and library user. This bill sends a direct message that I am no longer welcome in the state I was born in. I urge the senate and governor to reject the harmful and discriminatory add-ons and focus on the task at hand: budgeting, not discriminating.
Patty	Hamilton	A budget bill should contains only relevant things for a budget, not what should be multiple bills. So many of these changes will horrible obstacles and discomfort for innocent people. History is watching, please do the right thing.
Christine	Hamilton	Anti-LGBTQIA+ policy & LGBTQIA+ discrimination have no place in our budget or our state!
Steve	Hamilton County	No discrimination in the budget bill. No discrimination period.

Anna	Franklin County	<p>To whom it may concern,</p> <p>As a woman living in Franklin County, the proposed provisions in the state budget regarding budget - for example, cutting the funding of homeless shelters that provide help to youth who are undergoing gender transition; cutting federal funding for gender affirming care; cutting public school funding and library funding; and so much more - will actively harm myself and those in my community. There can be no good that comes from these parts of the budget; at the very least, they are political actions that must be considered in individual bills. I implore you to reconsider and revise the current proposed budget.</p>
Ariel Budin	Cleveland, Ohio....unfortunately	<p>Hey, Mr. Dewine? Can you please leave me, and other lgbt+ residents of Ohio alone?! I'm physically, mentally, and psychologically drained from the discrimination, and potential threats that MY states government (including yourself) has made towards my life. What you're proposing would erase and censor our existence, and make this state we call home uninhabitable. I know I can't change your (incorrect) opinions of lgbt citizens, specially trans folks, but at the very least can you leave us alone?</p> <p>Im so sick of my existence being used for political gain, which by the way you are doing. Life in Ohio isn't the greatest with little job opportunities, as well as inflation. PLEASE, do one good thing in your meaningless, grifting career, and leave us alone, and let us live our lives discriminately free.</p> <p>We've done this song and dance before January of 2024, and I'm not putting up with it again. This is beyond disgusting, Dewine!</p>
Gretchen	Medina County	<p>Discrimination written into the Ohio budget is wrong. Cutting necessary and scientifically and medically backed proven care for gender dysphoria from Medicaid is discrimination and dangerous and will cause grave harm to Ohio residents. Also cutting funds from homeless shelters that are affirming to lgbtq youth is also discrimination that will cost lives. I would highly recommend reading "Making Room" by Carl Siciliano who started the Ali Forney Center in NY or reach out to him. He spent years working with homeless lgbtq youth. Providing a safe affirming place where they can sleep at night is imperative for positive outcomes for these kids.</p>
kathleen	montgomery	<p>veto this bill this is very harmful to the lgbtq community not to mention millions could lose there health insurance and this will harm peoples health general if u allow lead into the water we drink you want another flint michigan on ur hands</p>
Elliot	Scioto	<p>These are policies actively trying to make people's lives worse.</p>

		<p>This is not in the best interests of Ohioans, and changes to things like gender markers and whatnot will only be a mess, as the current administrations passport situation has been. Ohio schools already struggle, we see it every day here in Southern Ohio, seeing music programs crumble. Even if you don't care about that, what comes after that? What sport or program goes next?</p> <p>I would like to say that I am a transgender Ohioan. I would also like to say that the people of Ohio don't care about us being part of their lives nearly as much as you think. Us having medical care hurts no one. Men do testosterone shots, women get plastic surgery, the same thing transgender people do. Why should it be restricted from us and not them?</p> <p>Many, if not all of these policies, are failing Ohioans, leaving them without clean water (another thing the people of Southern Ohio struggle with) and out in the cold. Any one of these is a stain on the "Heart of America."</p>
Skipper	Hamilton County	<p>This proposed budget is absolutely disgusting. From dismantling our great parks for the highest bidder, to restricting funding and access to information for our libraries, to lowering the quality of our water, to invading our personal privacy, this budget is rotten to the core. I am also deeply, personally disgusted by the attempts to attack LGBTQ rights and dismantle personal freedoms under the guise of a budget change. What sort of a government favors money over its people? How can you say you stand for the wellness of your constituents as you put more lead in our water and gut our public school systems? Rest assured, anyone who votes for this budget in its current form has solidly lost my vote forever.</p>
Wren	Franklin County	<p>HB 96 would cause so much harm to Ohio. Cutting public funding for the library, redefining gender, limiting access to LGBTQ+ material. I could go on and on with all of the things I disagree with. We say Ohio is a welcoming place for all, but actions speak louder than words. These policy changes at the very least should be proposed as individual bills and heard for public comment. I believe in an Ohio that is here for everyone and that is all about strengthening our communities. All Ohioans have a place in this great state. Please don't dismantle our committee with all of the horrid ideas that are in HB 96. Please stand up for queer Ohioans and the public institutions that foster this amazing state.</p>
Shelby	Cleveland, zip code 44119	<p>I'm a librarian and I take issue with the stipulation in the budget proposal that states materials in libraries with any LGBTQ+ content be made inaccessible to minors. There is absolutely no reason this language should be present in a budget proposal.</p>

		<p>Librarians are trained experts in responding to the needs of their communities, and librarians--NOT politicians--should be the ones to decide which books to make available to their patrons. If individual parents don't want their kids to read books with "LGBTQ+ content," that decision should be made by the parents, again, NOT by politicians.</p>
Ian	Summit	<p>HB96 would limit my access to much needed health care resources, eliminate my emergency shelters if I were to become homeless and overall would erase what my community has worked so hard to build in the last several decades! Discrimination does NOT belong in HB96!!!</p>
Alex	Cuyahoga County	<p>It is abhorrent that Ohio is considering sneaking in discriminatory policies and language into the state budget. Our state is diverse and our LGBTQ residents deserve safety and community provided from the state that they live in. Other text additions, including a state abortion database, and the leasing of public lands to oil companies, is so incredibly backwards it is almost unbelievable.</p>
Mariah	Lorain County	<p>As a mental health professional and concerned citizen, I am writing in strong opposition to HB 96 and the proposed state budget provisions that accompany it. This bill not only undermines the well-being of LGBTQ+ Ohioans, but it also poses broad threats to public health, education, environmental safety, and basic human rights across our state.</p> <p>First and foremost, eliminating funding for youth homeless shelters that support LGBTQ+ individuals is both unethical and dangerous. Studies consistently show that LGBTQ+ youth are disproportionately represented in the homeless population—up to 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ+, often due to family rejection. Denying them access to affirming shelter puts them at dramatically higher risk of suicide, substance abuse, and exploitation.</p> <p>Additionally, redefining gender as only two immutable sexes is medically and scientifically inaccurate. This definition disregards the medical definition of intersex, when an individual is born with medical variations in their sex characteristics. The American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, and the World Health Organization all recognize that gender is not binary and can differ from the sex assigned at birth. Restricting access to gender-affirming care—especially through Medicaid—will harm transgender individuals who already face high barriers to care and are at significantly higher risk for depression, anxiety, and</p>

		<p>suicide when denied treatment.</p> <p>HB 96's censorship of LGBTQ+ materials in libraries and its ban on Pride flags at government buildings are overtly discriminatory and infringe upon free expression. Limiting access to inclusive information and visible support alienates LGBTQ+ youth and adults alike, increasing feelings of isolation and stigma. Evidence shows that affirming environments significantly reduce suicide rates and improve mental health outcomes.</p> <p>Beyond its assault on LGBTQ+ communities, this bill weakens public infrastructure in alarming ways. Allowing more lead in drinking water jeopardizes the neurological development of children and endangers public health. Cutting funding to public schools and libraries while also limiting access to pediatric cancer research, minority-owned business support, and collective bargaining harms the most vulnerable Ohioans and stifles economic equity.</p> <p>Lastly, the proposal to lease public parks to private oil and gas companies undermines environmental protections and ignores the growing climate crisis. Public lands should serve the public good—not corporate interests.</p> <p>HB 96 is a sweeping attempt to institutionalize discrimination and dismantle systems that support health, education, and justice. I urge lawmakers to reject this bill and instead prioritize evidence-based policies that protect all Ohioans—especially those most at risk.</p>
Spencer	Lake County	<p>I would like to speak to several of the line items within the budget provisions that I feel have no positive fiscal effect on Ohioans, and, in fact, stand to drain funds through extensive legal hurdles as well as negatively impact members of vulnerable groups.</p> <p>I am a full-time employee in the technology sector. I spend my days working with tens of incredibly intelligent, kind individuals on matters of efficiency and innovation for our company. I am a son, a brother, a husband, and a friend to many queer and LGBTQIA+ people across all walks of life, and I would like to advocate both for myself, and for them.</p> <p>This bill, across thousands of pages, hides provisions to weaponize the funding that is meant to improve the lives of Ohioans to target housing for displaced youth, mental health</p>

		<p>access that saves lives, promote censorship and restrict parental rights, and adopt an executive order that has no fiscal justification and no connection to the budget.</p> <p>Vague language prohibiting affirmation of social gender transition in youth shelters will only serve to force unhoused kids--transgender or not--onto the streets. Does that sound like an improvement to our support of unhoused children? It is cruel, it is pointless, and it provides no fiscal incentive or justification. I, for one, would not want any child, no matter their gender or orientation, on the streets. This language needs to be removed from the bill.</p> <p>In the same vein, provisions withholding funds from Medicaid are based on similar language. Again, this begs the question of who stands to benefit from such a provision? This will disrupt services, increase bureaucratic red tape, and endanger those who need this life-saving care. That is not to mention the fact that this provision was not in the original bill. It needs to be removed.</p> <p>Censorship. That is the purpose of the proposed change to Chapter 3375 mandating books dealing with gender identity or sexual orientation be designated 18+. Books with adult content are already age restricted. Where is the limit? Gender identity is not something specific to the LGBTQIA+ community. Being a woman is a gender identity. Being a man is a gender identity. Everyone in this committee has one, whether they wish to call it that or not. That is not to mention that libraries are understaffed and underfunded, but we want to divert their time and resources to cataloging books on subjective language in a budget bill? And what then, of the parents? Is it not a parent's duty and privilege to ensure their children are reading age appropriate content? Should law-makers be the parents to every child in Ohio's libraries? It is not a lawmaker's job to determine what a child should or should not be reading, and Libraries are meant for EVERYONE. This is a waste of funds with no benefit, and is a clear exercise in censorship.</p> <p>Finally, the adoption of a flawed definition of sex. This has no business in a budget bill. It is a blatant attempt to quietly enact extremist and pseudo-scientific legislation that violates Article II, Section 15(D) of the Ohio Constitution. "No bill shall contain more than one subject, which shall be clearly expressed in its title." Remove this from the bill.</p>
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Joe	Hamilton	<p>HB96 is Just a terrible bill and will only lead to headaches in court as these issues are already in courts in the US and being struck down as this bill was proposed.</p> <p>Trying to pass this bill Garauntees your loss of votes.</p>
Cj	Trumbull County	<p>Trans lives matter. Your constituents lives matter! You will have to answer for your allegiance to hatred one of these days. Be remembered for your humanity.</p>
Jonathon	9351 Sheralee Dr	<p>Trans discrimination has no place in the Buckeye state.</p>
Jennifer Greenwood	Miami County	<p>Ohio should be a great place to live for everyone, no matter who they are. Please don't discriminate against LGBTQ+ people. There's no reason for it other than cruelty. It's not saving money, and it's definitely not making Ohio great again. Please, just stop with the constant attacks and make sure that OH welcomes everyone.</p>
William	Adams County	<p>Transgender people are not a threat or a drain on resources. They deserve to live and be happy just like anyone else, and they deserve access to health-care.</p>
Megan	Miami County	<p>Passing a budget like this will harm some of the most vulnerable Ohioans. Please use your power and privilege to make Ohio a safe place for ALL LGBTQ+ Ohioans who just</p>

		want to live happily in our great state.
Marisa	Franklin	<p>I am outraged by the blatant disregard for democracy and human dignity shown by Ohio lawmakers who rejected public testimony from Equality Ohio, TransOhio, and concerned citizens like myself. This act is more than just political maneuvering—it is a targeted attack on the transgender community, and it sends a chilling message: our voices, our lives, and our rights do not matter to those in power.</p> <p>Let me be clear: the testimonies that were silenced were not off-topic. They were not disruptive. They were not violating procedure. They were following every rule laid out for public participation—yet they were still tossed aside. Why? Because the content challenged a harmful, hateful agenda. This is not governance. This is oppression dressed in legislative clothing.</p> <p>We are witnessing a pattern—one where trans people are repeatedly used as scapegoats and pawns for political gain, especially by Republican lawmakers more interested in scoring culture war points than protecting real Ohioans. This cruelty is not accidental; it is strategic. And it is deeply wrong.</p> <p>To erase our voices from the record is to erase our humanity. But we will not be silenced. We will not go quietly while the state chips away at the rights, safety, and dignity of our trans neighbors, friends, family members, and community members. We demand better. We deserve better.</p> <p>This state belongs to all of us—not just those who hold power. And we will continue to speak, fight, and show up until every trans Ohioan is safe, seen, and supported.</p>
Joseph	Lucas County	<p>Assuming that your narrow view of human gender is accurate is the same as saying that humans only come in two colors, black and white! Ignoring the diversity of gender expression, like disregarding the diversity of the color spectrum, ignores reality and serves only to discriminate against those that fall outside your narrow definition of gender. Your ignorant bias institutionalizes irrational fear of that which you are unwilling to consider.</p> <p>By institutionalizing gender bias in the state budget language, you disenfranchise a portion of our community that already faces disproportionate discrimination on a daily basis for nothing more than their identity and self expression. The role</p>

		<p>of government is NOT to make life more difficult for those living in our state, but to encourage and support everyone's life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.</p> <p>I urge you to reconsider this foolish policy statement of gender-biased language in the state budget which should be concerned with how to wisely use the state's financial resources to provide needed government services to the residents of the state rather than excluding selected groups of people from those services for biased arbitrary reasons.</p>
Mike	Cuyahoga county	<p>I am a gay married man, my brothers are gay, my daughter is gay, and my son-in-law is trans. These policy changes are both discriminatory and unconstitutional! It's amazing that these changes are being proposed months after Trump took office. The fact that you are bowing down to the will of the Trump administration and there obvious attack against the lgbtq+ community, is both disappointing and frightening. The Ohio Senate should be ashamed of themselves. This type of autocratic repression cannot be tolerated!!!</p>
Ted	Franklin	<p>This budget is disgusting and shows how little you all care about the people you represent. Abandon these ludicrous budget proposals. God is watching and will judge you.</p>
Zo	United States	<p>I am deeply troubled by the proposed cuts to funding for LGBTIQA homeless shelter programs as well as to restrict gender affirming care coverage in Medicaid. Gender affirming care is life saving care and for people who have already had bottom surgery it is necessary for them to continue to have hormone replacement therapy due to their bodies being unable to produce it. To cut them off from hormone replacement therapy would make them have negative effects on their cardiovascular and skeletal health, as well as their mental health. To cut funding to one of the most vulnerable homeless populations is incredibly immoral and violent, and will surely backfire on you in the upcoming election cycle.</p>
Shaba	Franklin	<p>This is harmful. Suicide rates for trans youth are up. Ohio must stand up for equality and justice for all.</p>
A Concerned Black Trans Ohioan	Licking County	<p>As a Black Trans man living in Ohio, I am deeply disturbed by the blatant discrimination and harm embedded in the proposed state budget (HB 96). Let me be clear: our state budget should never be used as a backdoor for pushing extremist, anti-LGBTQ+ policies.</p> <p>HB 96 is nearly 5,000 pages—and hidden within it are dangerous changes that threaten my community's well-being,</p>

		<p>safety, and dignity. These are not budget issues. These are life issues. And they deserve to be heard publicly, not buried in fine print.</p> <p>This budget would strip support from homeless youth shelters that serve LGBTQ+ teens. It would redefine gender in a way that erases our existence. It would cut off access to gender-affirming care through Medicaid. It would even ban Pride flags and lock LGBTQ+ books away from young people searching for representation.</p> <p>That's not "fiscal responsibility"—that's discrimination.</p> <p>These proposals hurt real people. They hurt my people. They threaten the health of our children, the survival of our small businesses, the strength of our unions, the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the right to vote safely and freely.</p> <p>Ohioans deserve transparency and dignity—not hatred wrapped in budget language. If these policies are so necessary, then introduce them as standalone bills and let the public be heard.</p> <p>I'm asking you to reject HB 96. Not just for me—but for every Black, Trans, queer, working-class, and marginalized Ohioan who deserves to live in a state that values their humanity.</p> <p>Discrimination doesn't belong in our budget.</p>
Di	Columbus, OH/Delaware, Co.	<p>Unless members of the LGBTQIAP+ community are except from paying taxes, then they should receive the same rights as other Ohioans. Taxation, without representation and equal rights, is tyranny. No one is mandated to agree or like members of the LGBTQIAP+ community. They are, however, mandated to respect and uphold their rights. In the matters changing or challenging guidelines already in place to regarding the health, safety, welfare, or privacy of Ohioans, it is the government's responsibility to protect those residing or visiting Ohio without the threat of exceptions due to gender, gender identity, gender identity expression, race, age, religion, educational level, illness or disease, physical or mental limitation or challenge, color/ethnicity or place of origin. Furthermore, it is also the government of Ohio's responsibility to maintain, protect and defend public lands and parks from companies or agencies interested in leasing or buying said lands for the sake of striping them of oil, gas, minerals, vegetation/trees or killing/capturing non-threatening, indigenous animals, fish or birds.</p>

Evan M.	Franklin County	<p>This is such a blatant attack on our freedom and rights as Americans. Traditionally, it's the government's job to support the people by funding public programs that support health, education, and assistance. It is NOT the government's job to overstep their boundaries and tell people who can and cannot get healthcare that is proven to save lives. I implore the Senate and Governor of Ohio to remember their oaths.</p> <p>OF THE OHIO CONSTITUTION: BILL OF RIGHTS:</p> <p>Inalienable rights.</p> <p>§1 All men are, by nature, free and independent, and have certain inalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and seeking and obtaining happiness and safety. (1851)</p> <p>Right to alter, reform, or abolish government, and repeal special privileges.</p> <p>§2 All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for their equal protection and benefit, and they have the right to alter, reform, or abolish the same, whenever they may deem it necessary; and no special privileges or immunities shall ever be granted, that may not be altered, revoked, or repealed by the General Assembly. (1851)</p> <p>Right to assemble.</p> <p>§3 The people have the right to assemble together, in a peaceable manner, to consult for the common good; to instruct their Representatives; and to petition the General Assembly for the redress of grievances. (1851)</p> <p>Rights of conscience; education; the necessity of religion and knowledge.</p>
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§7 All men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own conscience. No person shall be compelled to attend, erect, or support any place of worship, or maintain any form of worship, against his consent; and no preference shall be given, by law, to any religious society; nor shall any interference with the rights of conscience be permitted. No religious test shall be required, as a qualification for office, nor shall any person be incompetent to be a witness on account of his religious belief; but nothing herein shall be construed to dispense with oaths and affirmations. Religion, morality, and knowledge, however, being essential to good government, it shall be the duty of the General Assembly to pass suitable laws, to protect every religious denomination in the peaceable enjoyment of its own mode of public worship, and to encourage schools and the means of instruction. (1851)

Freedom of speech; of the press; of libels.

§11 Every citizen may freely speak, write, and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of the right; and no law shall be passed to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech, or of the press. In all criminal prosecutions for libel, the truth may be given in evidence to the jury, and if it shall appear to the jury, that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was published with good motives, and for justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted. (1851)

Preservation of the freedom to choose

	<p>health care and health care coverage</p> <p>§21 (A) No federal, state, or local law or rule shall compel, directly or indirectly, any person, employer, or health care provider to participate in a health care system.</p> <p>(B) No federal, state, or local law or rule shall prohibit the purchase or sale of health care or health insurance.</p> <p>(C) No federal, state, or local law or rule shall impose a penalty or fine for the sale or purchase of health care or health insurance.</p> <p>(D) This section does not affect laws or rules in effect as of March 19, 2010; affect which services a health care provider or hospital is required to perform or provide; affect terms and conditions of government employment; or affect any laws calculated to deter fraud or punish wrongdoing in the health care industry.</p> <p>(E) As used in this Section,</p> <p>(1) "Compel" includes the levying of penalties or fines.</p> <p>(2) "Health care system" means any public or private entity or program whose function or purpose includes the management of, processing of, enrollment of individuals for, or payment for, in full or in part, health care services, health care data, or health care information for its participants.</p> <p>(3) "Penalty or fine" means any civil or criminal penalty or fine, tax, salary or wage withholding or surcharge or any named fee established by law or rule by a government established, created, or controlled agency that is used to punish or discourage the exercise of rights protected under this section. (2011)</p> <p>The Right to Reproductive Freedom</p>
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		<p>with Protections for Health and Safety</p> <p>§22 A. Every individual has a right to make and carry out one's own reproductive decisions, including but not limited to decisions on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. contraception;2. fertility treatment;3. continuing one's own pregnancy;4. miscarriage care; and5. abortion. <p>B. The State shall not, directly or indirectly, burden, penalize, prohibit, interfere with, or discriminate against either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. An individual's voluntary exercise of this right or2. A person or entity that assists an individual exercising this right, unless the State demonstrates that it is using the least restrictive means to advance the individual's health in accordance with widely accepted and evidence-based standards of care. However, abortion may be prohibited after fetal viability. But in no case may such an abortion be prohibited if in the professional judgment of the pregnant patient's treating physician it is necessary to protect the pregnant patient's life or health. <p>C. As used in this Section:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. "Fetal viability" means "the point in a pregnancy when, in the professional judgment of the pregnant patient's treating physician, the fetus has a significant likelihood of survival outside the uterus with reasonable measures. This is determined on a case-by-case basis."2. "State" includes any governmental entity and any political subdivision. <p>D. This Section is self-executing.</p> <p>(2023)</p>
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Amanda	Wayne	<p>These policies target and cause harm to so many people who have never wanted more than to live their lives and be happy like everyone else in this state and nation. While I am not trans myself, I have many trans friends and family members who are affected by policies like these and I have never know anyone less worthy of such harmful and life limiting policies. Why</p>

		would anyone want to make laws which place higher limits and engage in discourse which single them out?
Michelle Locke	Franklin County	<p>Very disappointed with our lawmakers in Ohio in regards to the backwards steps they are taking with LGBTQ rights and equality. We live in Ohio and we vote and pay taxes and it's extremely disappointing, to things decisions being made not based on science and freedom, but fear and discrimination. Requiring libraries to make LGBTQ content inaccessible to minors sends what sort of message?</p> <p>I sincerely hope you will reconsider some of this language in the budget.</p>
Dave	Delaware	<p>HB 96 is a bill that is counter Ohio's commitment to be a safe place for all of its citizens no matter their age to thrive. It ignores the scientific reality that there are more than two genders. All doctors know of the reality of intersex individuals who are born with the anatomy of both male and female in the same person. It cuts funding for pediatric research. It makes unfair the process by which minority owned businesses can access state contracts. None of these things contributes to the flourishing of our citizens. I urge that this bill be vetoed!</p>
Richard	Montgomery County	<p>Your proposals would harm transgender and non-binary citizens. This is immoral. Cruelty toward those with whom you disagree is not consistent with the gospel.</p>
Joe	Franklin	<p>To the honorable members of the Ohio Senate, regarding proposed state budget HB96, I feel compelled to finally speak out on behalf of Ohio citizens who are being singled out for punishment for no conceivably good reason.</p> <p>I have heard the reasoning behind why gay and trans people are being labeled as a threat, with language that pretends that such targeting is intended to "protect" children (especially girls) from harm. I find this reasoning to be deeply flawed. Gay and trans citizens of our state (and our country) are not more likely to harm girls or children in general. There is no evidence or proof behind this claim that gay or trans citizens are a greater threat to children or girls than their straight or cisgender counterparts. Quite the opposite is true. Statistics very clearly show that trans and gay people are far more likely to be VICTIMS of psychological, sexual and physical abuse, not perpetrators. This proposed budget, which unfairly targets trans and gay citizens using grossly inaccurate stereotypes, will only increase the disproportionate harm and suffering already being experienced by this demographic. It is unconscionable to consider intentionally inflicting even more</p>

	<p>harm in this way. Many of those who would be harmed are children themselves. This bill makes no logical sense and will literally protect no one, while simultaneously inflicting great harm on a carefully selected few.</p> <p>I am a father of two with a beautiful wife and two wonderful children. We raised both our children according to their birth genders in a very traditional way. Nevertheless, one of our children made the discovery that they were gender non-binary. This wasn't something that they were taught or chose to be. It's something that they came to realize over time. It was with fear and anxiety that they broke the news to us, the parents. We made the decision to love and to not judge. So many other kids who come of age with the same discovery are not so lucky. They are rejected by their families, friends and churches based on stereotypes and religious bigotry, simply for being honest with who and what they are. Having caused no harm to anyone, gay and trans children still endure harm from everyone they know and trust. I know from my experience as a father that gender identity and sexual orientation are personality characteristics that are discovered, not chosen or taught. The scientific and medical experts agree with my anecdotal experience. There is no credible evidence to suggest that such major characteristics are simple matters of choice, like what to wear or what football team to follow. There is zero evidence that gay or trans people are more likely to cause harm or abuse.</p> <p>Evidence is what matters. Policy decisions should always be based on evidence - actual facts - not fiction (aka "alternative facts"). Facts are observable, verifiable and undeniably, objectively true. They are not based on superstition, stereotypes, gut-feelings, conventional wisdom or popular belief. The policy decisions being considered in HB96 are ones that deliberately seek to separate citizens into two groups - one that is a favored class with enhanced rights and powers to openly discriminate against others, while the other is a diminished subclass with few rights and little power that the state intends to treat with open hostility. If you had substantial, clear evidence that this subclass was truly engaging in harmful activity, then the policy might make a little sense. There is no such evidence in existence regarding gay or trans citizens. One might find an individual anecdote, but no pattern, no persuasive evidence whatsoever. On the other hand, there is very clear evidence in HB96 that the Ohio Statehouse is engaging in behavior that is deliberately intended to cause</p>
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		<p>harm to a specific group of Ohio citizens. Perhaps they should hold a mirror up to themselves when looking for someone to punish for willfully destructive behavior.</p> <p>My apologies if that concept is offensive to anyone, but I am deeply offended by HB96. I am sick and tired of innocent people being scapegoated and harmed in the name of "protection". This bill, while protecting absolutely no one, would profoundly harm people I know - people I love, people I trust, people who are just trying to live their authentic lives in peace and who have never considered harming those who inexplicably hate them. This bill is nothing short of evil masquerading as an attempt to do something good. The people who wrote it should be ashamed. This bill is nothing but an absolute disgrace and thoroughly deserves to be treated as such. I cannot be any kinder or more respectful to the architects of such a policy proposal.</p>
Jennifer M	Summit country, OH	<p>As the parent of LGBTQIA children, I ask you to vote no on this terrifying, Project 2025 authoritarianistic bill. Also, as a biologist who has worked for 30 years in basic and clinical research, I know that gender and sex are on a spectrum, from XX to XXX to XXY to XYY to X- genetic diversity is just as real as preference in sexual identity or attraction. I support state and federally sponsored public education, delivered with equity. We support a strong union that provides workplace protections and fights to support workers' rights. Vote no on HB96.</p>
Robin	Cuyahoga County	<p>Enshrining anti-trans and anti-LGB bias in the state budget isn't what budgets are for. I oppose requiring that all materials in libraries with any LGBTQ+ content be made inaccessible to minors and I oppose pretending that trans people do not exist, but for heaven's sake, if we must vote on these things, vote on them openly instead of sneaking them into the budget. And as long as we're talking about the budget, removing funding for youth homeless shelters that help LGBTQ+ youth and families is downright cruel. These kids are at great risk. At least give them shelter.</p>
Nancy Dollard	Lake Township in Stark County	<p>As an ALLY, I SUPPORT the LGBTQ+ community and their legal CIVIL RIGHTS because diverse, equitable, and inclusive policies make us a better state and nation. As an Ohio resident for over 40+ years, I want to see PRIDE flags displayed on all buildings, LGBTQ+ books in public and private schools, LGBTQ+ books available for minors and adults in public libraries, Medicaid funding for gender-affirming care, funding for youth homeless shelters that help LGBTQ+ youth, and acknowledgement of multiple genders as people can self-identify as they see fit.</p>

Darren	Medina	<p>Let's keep the most pass budget bill about items pertaining to the budget only and not push through anti-LGBTQ amendments or any other amendments that have nothing to do with the budget bill, like that of porn ID restrictions or eliminating fluoride in the water, for those effected need to be able to have time to speak out about it and thought and consideration needs to be taken about how these unrelated riders are going to harm those being targeted before just passing them. One-line subjects only in a bill like the constitution states and the budget bill should be no different.</p>
Dave	Erie County	<p>HB 96 is an insult to the citizen of Ohio and will inflict injury to the children and citizens of this state. Cuts to education and to libraries, cuts to cancer research, bans on LGBTQ+ issues the list goes on and on. As a resident of this Great State for 56 years I am embarrassed by what is happening in our state. This is bullying, we have real issues to deal with let's not make up issues that pick on the weak to make ourselves feel like we are getting something done. This is not what the people of this state want, we want leadership that does not bow down to bullies and weakens our state through lack of education, health care, and diversity.</p>
Stephanie B	Lucas County	<p>The discriminatory language toward the LGBTQ community has absolutely no place in a budget bill!!! We, as a nation, face so many huge issues right now that the hateful focus on such a small group of people is ridiculous. This entire budget is nothing but a massive collection of harmful ideologies and regressive actions. It should be broken down and allowed to be voted on by us, the citizens of Ohio. This bill is not in the best interests of the people who voted for those that wrote it. Politicians might want to try remembering that they exist as public servants, and they are not incapable of being removed from office if they don't appropriately represent the people who put them there.</p>
Sarah	Hamilton	<p>Cruelty doesn't make our state great. Trans people just want to exist and live regular lives—they've always been among us. It will add loads of pain and suffering though. Is that the point? Stopping funding for youth and homeless shelters that help LGBTQ folks and their families? A vast majority of kids who are homeless fall into that group. This legislation that you're sneaking into the BUDGET, of all things, will make that number even higher by spreading fear and hate for people who just want to live their lives, causing them to be kicked out of their homes at higher rates. And then there's suicide—is getting trans kids to kill themselves the point? Do you think men can't handle seeing a tampon in a restroom? Small minded</p>

		<p>meanness like these provisions won't improve life for anyone, and the shady way you're trying to pass them shows me that you know that most Ohioans would not support these changes. At least put them in separate bills and own your hateful ideology.</p>
Elizabeth	Cuyahoga County	<p>I'm a queer person who grew up in Cuyahoga County and left as soon as I graduated from high school for New York because I couldn't see a future here for myself or my growing family. I was so thrilled to move back in 2017 when federal laws said my marriage could be recognized here and it felt that living here overall was safer. I am appalled at the measures that the House is now taking to formalize the discrimination, especially toward young people, that I fled 20 years ago. Why would we want some of the best and brightest people to leave the state when what Ohio so desperately needs is diverse young community members to carry us into the decades ahead. This discriminatory language will hurl ALL Ohioans—not just LGBTQ folks, though we deserve not to be erased from public life either. I strongly exhort you to cut this language from the budget and make a state that can flourish in the 21st century.</p>
Paige	Cuyahoga County	<p>We desperately need the funding for our schools and libraries. The library is an invaluable resource to me and my family that we use every week, and it seems obvious to me that we all have a stake in our states education system being adequately funded. It's an investment in our future, and without it, we will go the way of states like Mississippi with increasing poverty and under-educated populace. Additionally, the provisions related to the LGBTQ people seem purely malicious. This isn't about a balanced budget - I don't think government agencies are spending all our hard earned tax dollars on thousands of pride flags. Gay people are a minority, but our community of support is NOT - some 75% of the population support LGBTQ rights. If passed, this bill will have negative impacts in the next election besides the harm it will cause to innocent young gay and trans citizens.</p>
Joelle	Columbus, Franklin County	<p>LGBTQIA+ plus people are created in the image of a diverse God (Genesis 1:27). To deny our humanity is to deny our sacred worth. The role of government is to protect the vulnerable, the language in this budget will do grave harm to people already marginalized. Remove this language to keep people safe.</p>
Janette	Greene county	<p>As a transgender woman, I am deeply harmed by the provisions in HB 96 that attack the very existence and dignity of people like me. This budget is not just numbers and</p>

		<p>policy—it contains cruel, ideological assaults on LGBTQ+ Ohioans that would strip us of visibility, health care, support services, and even access to information.</p> <p>I have paid taxes in the state of Ohio for over 35 years. My tax dollars are just as good as anyone else's, and I am just as entitled to the rights, dignity, and protections afforded to every other person in this state. This budget tells me—and people like me—that we are second-class citizens, that our identities are invalid, and that our lives are not worth protecting.</p> <p>Redefining gender as binary and unchangeable erases who I am. Denying Medicaid coverage for gender-affirming care threatens the health and safety of trans people, especially those already struggling. Restricting access to LGBTQ+ books and resources in libraries, banning Pride flags from public spaces, and removing menstrual products from men's restrooms may seem symbolic to some—but to us, they are signals of exclusion, humiliation, and state-sponsored erasure.</p> <p>This isn't fiscal policy—it's an ideological attack, and it's being done through the budget process, denying the public a chance to speak openly. That is not democracy, and it is not justice.</p> <p>I urge the Ohio Senate to remove these discriminatory provisions. All of us deserve to live with safety, health, dignity, and visibility. I'm not asking for special treatment—just equal treatment. Let us live. Let us heal. Let us be seen.</p>
Ashley F.	Hamilton County	<p>This budget is explicitly discriminatory toward the transgender community and violates their right to freedom of privacy. Focusing your attention on singling out and attacking an already-vulnerable community which makes up a fraction of 1% of our population is a waste of taxpayer dollars and doesn't help anybody- it only hurts Ohioans. LGBTQ+ youth have some of the highest unemployment and unhoused rates of any demographic in our state, and you have the audacity to cut funding from shelters who take in and provide support to LGBTQ+ youth. You should be ashamed of yourselves. Please spend time with those in the LGBTQ+ and transgender communities before making decisions that will make their lives more difficult and will increase already high rates of depression and suicide.</p>
Dale	Warren	<p>As an Ohioan with a transgender son and the pastor of a congregation with many transgender people including youth, these policy proposals against transgender people will cause</p>

		harm. I urge them to be removed, defeated, and or vetoed.
Crystal	Summit county	Discrimination doesn't belong in Ohio
Rebecca Baker	Hamilton	Government should be for the people. We elect the people to government, we give the government our resources. It is exhausting to have to keep fighting for the rights we deserve. Please protect our LGBTQ youth - one of the most vulnerable of our populations. I want my tax dollars to go to public school, funding for youth homeless shelters, keeping our water clean, to our libraries. This budget is depressing and atrocious.
Tennille	Hamilton	I am terrified by the language used in these bills. As a Trans person who just wants to live life. I am a human being just like you; although you see me as different and less than, I am not. Trans folks are not the villains as many would want to makes us out to be. These bills will make life extremely difficult for many Trans and other marginalized communities. What is the point??? We are marginalized and powerless as is. What more do they want from us? These same individuals claim that want to protect children, yet want to increase lead in our water and reduce funding for education,housing, and healthcare for the same children you claim that you are protecting. Over the past few years I have watched politicians make Trans folks the sacrificial lambs. No child would want to be born in opposition of the rest of the world. We don't have it all figured we're trying to learn and navigate this life just like everyone else.
Connor	Franklin County, Madison Township	It breaks my heart that this proposed budget contains so many items completely unrelated to the state's budget. It is not up to the state in the first place to define what gender is or what it means. It most certainly is not up to the state to attempt to covertly do so in a budget proposal. Please, please please please, refocus the budget on actual budgetary concepts. I haven't highlighted all of the extraneous ideas in this proposed budget, and I don't feel I need to. You know exactly what I am talking about.
Em	Franklin county	Y'all... These are all terrible ideas. Not only are they terrible ideas, it is so obvious that you are making ridiculous proposals to try to get away with things only slightly less terrible. This is a direct attack on people that have no choice but to rely on public resources. Privatizing resources will only cause suffering. Taking away awareness and education harms everyone. These proposed items will lead to an increase in the polarization of people. Dismissing and demonizing a group of people because they are different, go against your religious beliefs, or make you uncomfortable are not reasons to write legislation about them. The statements surrounding "scientific

		<p>facts" are simply incorrect. What science are you basing this decision on? Which experts did you consult? What research did you read?</p>
Olivia	Columbus, Ohio. Franklin County	<p>Rep. Brian Stewart claims that extra discriminatory provisions added to our state budget bill are "common sense." In reality, common sense is knowing a budget is for planning government spending, not for unnecessary and harmful discrimination.</p> <p>I am absolutely appalled by the attacks on gender expression and gender affirming care. To recognize gender as only two unchangeable sexes is to erase and harm a large portion of our Ohio citizens. It makes Ohio an unsafe place for many of my friends. Frankly, it also ignores the natural diversity of human biology.</p> <p>Furthermore, I am dismayed by how many of these attacks target or will disproportionately affect our children and youth. Restricting minors' access to certain books in libraries will disrupt their learning, as will cuts to public schools and libraries in general. Less funding for youth homeless shelters that support members of LGBT+ community means more children and young people living on the streets. Higher amounts of lead in water and leasing our public parks to oil and gas companies will create more poisonous pollution, which will more strongly affect our children, whose bodies are still growing. How can our budget plan for the future of Ohio if we do not have the best interests in mind for our future generations?</p> <p>And this is only a portion of the provisions to which I object. I have no doubt that members of the Ohio Congress have snuck these provisions into the budget because they know how controversial they are and fear they would not otherwise be passed into law. As a concerned citizen, I am not going to sit by and watch that happen. The Ohio budget as it stands will do more harm than good for Ohio citizens. At the very least, some of these provisions should be kept out of the budget entirely, as they do not relate to funding at all. Then, we should not be cutting essential programs and institutions that provide care and education to Ohio citizens. I urge you to consider the best interests of Ohioans. Thank you.</p>
Greyson	Ashtabula	<p>The purpose of legislature is to provide a safeguard against actions that could harm people and their communities. Purposefully discluding people with bill language does exactly</p>

		the opposite.
McKenna	Cleveland, OH	<p>I'm writing to request that you please remember your constituents and actively work to not implement discrimination into the Ohio budget. This includes discrimination against LGBTQ+ people in Ohio by instituting rules that state there are only 2 genders (which a great number of doctors disagree with) and advocating for the banishment of pride flags, books, funding, and other items that free people should be able to promote and have access to. These people are voters and members of the community and we all have a right to safety and the means to express ourselves.</p>
Carlos	Hamilton	<p>Allow the people's voices to be heard. We are tax paying citizens and deserve a seat at the table. You can't erase us, we have been here and will continue to be here. So do your job and listen to we the people.</p> <p>My son has a sweet disposition. He's outgoing, charming and doesn't have an angry bone in his body. He's smart, involved within his school community including playing in the marching band and theater with aspirations to continue into college. He has been on hormone therapy for 4 years now.</p> <p>When he came out in 2019, my wife and I went through the entire range of emotions. We knew our love for him would not waiver, but were terrified because we understood the obstacles he was going to face in life - Such as this language and the other gender denying bills introduced into legislation and passed.</p> <p>I was born and raised a Catholic, as was my wife. We were married by the Church; our children were baptized. We are very familiar with the church's teachings.</p> <p>We have local ties, my family has lived in this region for years. We pay our taxes, vote, and make it a point to support local establishments. I love my country and want OH as our forever home, but continuing down this dark path against the transgender community has me considering otherwise.</p> <p>WE are Ohioans and we want what's best for ALL OF US.</p>
Jordan	Montgomery County	<p>This budget is an assault on our Constitutional rights. A free search for knowledge is critical in a democracy. A section of this budget would censor materials surely do to bigotry. It must be vetoed.</p>

El	Preble County	<p>HB 96 is a harmful bill that oversteps its boundaries as a budget bill and needs heavy revision before it should even be considered. Its attempt to assert that there are only two sexes is counterfactual and not supported by science, making Ohio look uneducated and backwards. The attempt to restrict LGBTQ+ content in public libraries also has nothing to do with budgetary concerns and violates the First Amendment. The banning of pride flags from government buildings and menstrual products from men's bathrooms is just ridiculous - who is harmed by these actions? These provisions are reactionary and pathetic. Ohio is better than this.</p> <p>Even areas that do have to do with the budget are concerning. An end to funding for homeless shelters that help LGBTQ+ youth? One of the biggest factors contributing to youth homelessness is youth being kicked out of their homes for being LGBTQ+. Our children need more support, not less. This provision is simply cruel to a minority that is already suffering.</p> <p>HB 96 is full of attacks on our most vulnerable. Provisions that allow more lead in our water and allow PUBLIC lands to be leased to oil and gas companies are hazardous to our health. Cuts in funding to schools and libraries, educational institutions that are already underfunded, will drastically worsen education and access to necessary resources the most vulnerable members of our communities rely on. And cuts in funding to pediatric cancer research? Unbelievable that this is even a consideration.</p> <p>HB 96 is unacceptable. Ohio deserves better and has the ability to be better. We cannot allow such a harmful bill to go forward. Doing so would only send Ohio backward.</p>
Ashley	Hamilton County	<p>The budget language—asserting that sex is binary and unchangeable—not only disregards medical and legal realities but also directly contradicts the missions of both organizations, which advocate for the dignity, rights, and recognition of transgender people in Ohio. I condemn the decision by the Ohio Government Oversight and Reform Committee to reject public testimony submitted by TransOhio, Equality Ohio, and community members regarding harmful anti-transgender language proposed in the state budget. Stop attempting to silence trans voices and the voices of community members who respect our right to life, liberty, and happiness.</p>
Jordan	Galloway	<p>What's the point in harming the smallest groups of people in</p>

		this country when together we can team up and actually achieve the world dominance you crave?
Janice L Courts	Franklin County	Please do not pass HB96 every single one of the cuts will HURT Ohio citizens! And does not advance our state.
Matthew	Cincinnati (Hamilton County)	Why do these conservatives fixate on gender issues? Because it's a helpful distraction from what they're doing to our economy. They, just like Democrats, want to continue consolidating corporate power of our economy. But the Democratic Party strategy is to let the Republicans do their dirty work. The Republican Party does their dirty work, making democratic control of our economy impossible, by concealing their work with cultural issues. Gender. Abortion. All the while, life continues to be dominated by massive corporations, wealthy real estate developers, and the little people have no say. Oh, unless they're culturally conservative and are tired of seeing those "weirdos with the blue hair". Just get over it. (PS the Democratic Party strategy is to "defend trans people", "defend immigrants", "protect the right to an abortion" meanwhile not really doing much in their power to achieve those ends, always saying "you have to elect us, because the republicans are mean!" i am tired of this corrupt and stifling two party system and i pray for the day it crashes) Leave us queers alone, you know you have better things to do.
Jenn	Muskingum	Please do not pass this bill!