

Hi, my name is Bridget Elm and I live in Montgomery County. I'm writing in opposition of H.B. No. 96.

First, this bill proposes to legally define sex strictly as male or female. This change would exclude recognition of transgender, nonbinary, and intersex individuals, potentially requiring them to carry identification documents that do not align with their gender identity. Such a definition could also impact access to gender-affirming care and other services. This harms trans, nonbinary and intersex Ohioans, and it does not belong in our state's budget. Please reject this cruel and unnecessary provision. It will make Ohio an unwelcoming state and will cause people to not want to come to Ohio for concerts or sporting events, seek them to avoid applying to colleges here, or even feel safe vacationing or driving through the state. This has no business being tacked on a budget bill.

Second, the bill alters the distribution of marijuana tax revenues, diverting promised funds away from previously designated social justice and community programs. The people already voted on this.

Third, the budget introduces a 2.75% flat income tax, reducing rates for individuals earning over \$102,400. This change disproportionately benefits higher-income individuals while offering minimal relief to lower-income residents. The shift may also reduce state revenue, potentially impacting funding for essential public services.

Fourth, the bill arbitrarily reduces funding for essential services, including public education, childcare, healthcare, and food assistance programs. Simultaneously, it allocates substantial funds, reportedly a \$600 million handout, to billionaire interests.

Fifth, the bill undermines collective bargaining rights for workers, prohibits faculty and staff at public universities from striking, and restricts the number of hours state employees are allowed to work from home.

Lastly, HB96 maintains provisions that will likely impede the coordination and efficiency of public benefit systems, including Medicaid, SNAP, TANF, and WIC. The bill's language could lead to fragmented services, making it even more challenging for individuals to access comprehensive support.

Overall this bill does not seem to be in the best interest for those living within the state that are already having issues making ends meet. I have lived in Ohio all my life and find it disheartening that such a budget has been proposed and is making me have to consider if I will be able to remain living in this state.

Thank you for considering my points.