



ARIENNE CHILDREY
ST. MARYS CITY COUNCILWOMAN

ari4ohio@gmail.com
St. Marys , Ohio

June 04, 2025

Dear Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez and Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson,

My name is Arienne Childrey. I am a proud transgender Ohioan and was honored to serve as Ohio's first openly transgender city council member. I write to you today in strong and unequivocal opposition to House Bill 96.

HB 96 is not a budget bill—it is a blatant attempt to enshrine discrimination into Ohio law. Disguised as a policy measure, this bill pushes forward a slate of anti-trans and anti-LGBTQ+ provisions that are cruel, unnecessary, and dangerous.

One of the most alarming aspects of this bill is its attempt to redefine legal sex as “biological sex” under state law. This is not semantics. It is a deliberate effort to erase the legal existence of transgender, nonbinary, and intersex people in Ohio.

By mandating that state IDs reflect “biological sex,” HB 96:

- Erases the identities of transgender and intersex Ohioans who have updated their documents to reflect who they are.
- Places us in conflict with federal law, especially the Real ID Act, risking denial of essential services like air travel, employment verification, and more.
- Puts us at higher risk of violence and discrimination by forcing us to carry IDs that out us everywhere we go.
- Violates basic civil rights and bodily autonomy.

This bill doesn't stop there. HB 96 would:

- Ban Pride flags from government buildings, attempting to erase visible support for a community under attack.
- Defund youth shelters that support LGBTQ+ people, even as youth homelessness and suicide rates remain high.
- Censor LGBTQ+ books and resources in public libraries, removing lifelines for young people searching for hope, identity, and truth.

Let's be clear: HB 96 solves no real problem. It doesn't improve safety, health, or education. What it does is send a loud, chilling message to trans people: that we do not belong here. As someone who has served my community with pride, I find that message devastating.

But let me also be clear about this: We do belong here. Transgender people are your neighbors, your coworkers, your veterans, your students—and yes, your political leaders. This bill is not about fairness. It is about fear. And it must be rejected.

Ohioans want leaders who solve real problems—not ones who invent new ways to hurt marginalized people. I urge you to vote no on HB 96.

Respectfully,

Arienne Childrey

Advocate and St Marys
City Councilwoman



ari4ohio@gmail.com