

Trans Unity Coalition

House Bill 96 Testimony to the Senate Health Committee, May 13 2025

Bree Taylor, Founder & Executive Director

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Liston, and Members Ingram, Manchester, Roegner, and Romanchuk of the Senate Health Committee, I appreciate this opportunity to publicly speak regarding HB 96.

My name is Bree Taylor, I am blessed by she/her pronouns, and I founded and serve as executive director to the transgender advocacy non-profit Trans Unity Coalition.

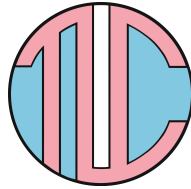
Over the past month, our team has been providing awareness to several of the provisions contained in House Bill 96. We have often heard that many are not even aware that these provisions exist, which unfortunately includes both members of the public as well as our lawmakers. As a 4,063 page bill, one amended with an additional 1,018 page omnibus with under 24 hours of committee life and House passage under 72 hours, it is wholly understandable that many impactful, dangerous components could be snuck in through just a handful of sentences among the many pages and go unnoticed, such as one I am about to mention today. With no practical time for the public to voice concern, it calls to question the acting leadership, not a question of success, but one of transparency and loyalty to the public.

But that was the House. And this is the Senate.

Line Items 133338 through 133346, defining Section 291.20, refer to cutting all public DOH general revenue funds set for youth homelessness that covers both youth and pregnant women, should a shelter promote or affirm transition, through wording broad enough to include the transition of not only those utilizing said shelters but also staff.

As a former foster child, access to shelters was the last line of defense from living on the streets, and as someone who experienced that as well I want to make it very clear: shelters save lives and they are vital to any society caring for its people. **But they must be equitable: accessible and welcoming of all people, including the transgender community.** Much like any safe space: a firehouse, a house of worship; a shelter must be maintained as a non-political environment freely open to all.

Roughly 40% of homeless youth are LGBTQ+ in America¹, showing a clear disproportionality from the base 7-9% LGBTQ+ of all Americans. That is practically flipping a coin, and it should not come as a surprise that in this day and age many underage runaways and those kicked out of their families came into that position simply because they are queer, and especially because they are transgender.



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Yesterday I shared that 42% of queer youth make an attempt on their own lives. In the time it took to share this testimony, that is four new attempts, but in the time since I spoke since yesterday: 1,444.

These are not phantom numbers, but cold statistics that speak to the need to do better to protect queer and trans youth. And often these are the kids that were rejected simply for who they are. They deserve love and inclusion, and not more rejection.

Please reconsider this provision. On behalf of myself and the many who did not feel safe to send testimony, please, we implore you to remove this and all other harmful provisions which will hurt Ohio's transgender community. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Bree Taylor; May 13, 2025