

My name is Johnathan Jones, though I go by Kompani. This is my testimony as a 20 year old trans student in Cleveland Ohio. Not affiliated with anybody outside of myself though I am involved in my university studies.

Quite frankly I am disgusted at the current state of things. I wake up to a world that doesn't take science into account, a world that wants to use its clear prejudice as a vehicle to suppress people they don't want to understand.

These policies are sick, and a direct reflection of the exact types of ideals and action that leads to mass suicide within my community. To take away the language and education of kids that deserve the same amount of medically proven care and respect and anyone else, to embolden parents who would not be able to love their child should their brain not function in a way they understand, and to discriminate against others by weakening their options, scholarships, and statements, under a false claim of DEI.

I come from a lane of life where my folks weren't around to help me succeed academically let alone emotionally nor mentally. What kept me from the typical path of a thuggish street life, what kept me ALIVE and any level of hopefulness, was the people that fought for me in the same systems our government wants eradicated. It wasn't my racist, homophobic bloodline that helped me realize who I am today, or that life might be worth the time I never wanted to give it, and it sure as hell wasn't the dunces who are sat thinking this bill will bring positive change. It was my school environment that let me wake up and realize there was more for me in the world. The environment that echoed the sentiment that no matter the walk of life I got cut, there was something I could do. I'm proudly the first of my family to even make it this far into college academically, which would not have been possible without the diversity of my institution, the inclusion programs that ensured I had a space to be involved and grow, and a platform to be able to speak on the very REAL issues that plague the children our government seems to not understand have the capacity to navigate given the foundation.

To take this away is to ask for a cleansing of these groups.

To ask for kids anywhere near what my lived experience went through to walk alone.

I write this with the idea stained in my head that you will not listen. But if there's even a sliver of a chance for my message to be a brick in the wall between a kid like me and isolation, or disdain towards themselves, others, or worse, it's worth a shot.

I may not be religious, but just this once I pray I am proven wrong. But either way in the end, at least the only blood on my hands will be my own.

Do the right thing.

- Kompani