

Chair Romanchuk, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the Senate Medicaid Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Alex Fay, I am a registered nurse who works and lives in Cleveland.

I am here to strongly urge the committee to remove many disastrous items from the House-passed operating budget, including the Medicaid Trigger Language (section 5163.04), the Federal Mirror Language (Section 126.10), and the discriminatory and harmful language that takes many negative actions against the LGBTQ community including stating there are only two sexes and restricting Medicaid funding for gender-affirming care.

As a nurse who works in a community clinic, most of my patients rely on their Medicaid to access our services, and without Medicaid would not be able to get routine check ups, manage their chronic illnesses, and seek urgent care when they need it. Furthermore, many of my patients are part of the LGBT community and deserve to have their identities not only validated but supported through access to gender-affirming care and recognition of their gender identity or sexual orientation. Ohio could be a state that strives for health equity and allows our communities to thrive – instead, when ranking the healthiest states Ohio was 34 (<https://assets.americashealthrankings.org/app/uploads/allstatesummaries-ahr24.pdf>), and if this language is written into the budget, our ranking will drop even further.

I ask you to consider my testimony and remove the Medicaid Trigger Language (section 5163.04) and the Federal Mirror Language (Section 126.10), as well as the anti-LGBT language from the House-passed budget. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Alex Fay, BSN, RN