

Chair Eklund, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Minority Member Thomas, and the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, my name is Colleen Munley and I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Bill 11, the Ohio Fairness Act.

My name is Christian D. Saine, age 51, resident of Bay Village, Ohio. I have been an Ohio-licensed attorney since graduating from Case Western Reserve University School of Law in 1997. I have lived in Ohio since 1994. I have worked as an attorney in two large, full-service law firms in Cleveland, and since 2003 as an in-house attorney for two large manufacturing companies in Cleveland. My 19 year old son – a college sophomore – is gay.

I fully support the Ohio Fairness Act. Unfortunately, discrimination is deeply engrained in American society. I am in favor of anything that can be done to eliminate the ability to discriminate based on any factor – but especially in this case due to sexual orientation or gender identity. I believe in the ability of every person to work where they want to work and in their chosen field without fear or hesitation. Every person should be able to live in the city, town and neighborhood of their choosing without fear of any discrimination or repercussion. And every person should be able to have full access to any goods, services or opportunities that are otherwise publicly available.

Ohio will soon find itself at an even greater disadvantage than it already finds itself if the Ohio Fairness Act is not passed and enacted into law. It is unbelievable to me that talented individuals and companies would ever second-guess coming into this state because they fear for their safety or legal rights, or if they would become non-competitive by not being able to attract and maintain a talented work force.

For me personally, my amazingly talented and gifted son specifically choose to go to college outside of Ohio so that he would have broader employment opportunities beyond Ohio – due in large part to the fact that he is not afforded the basic rights that he will have in many other states. He will be a scientist, an educator, a performer, a lawyer or a doctor – and he will be wildly successful and a wonderful contribution to whatever community he lives in. It quite possibly will not be in Ohio due to the lack of personal protection and rights that this state affords many of its citizens. It personally saddens me that this might be the case, but in the current legal landscape, and without passage of laws such as the Ohio Fairness Act, I have absolutely no reason to try to dissuade him otherwise.

I urge you to pass Senate Bill 11, the Ohio Fairness Act.

Thank you for your time and consideration.