

Chair Eklund, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Minority Member Thomas, and the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, my name is Sarah Hodson and I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Bill 11, the Ohio Fairness Act, which would add “sexual orientation” and “gender identity or expression” to Ohio’s nondiscrimination laws.

As an educator in Ohio’s schools, I live by the golden rule—treat others the way you want to be treated. I use this rule to teach students, the future of Ohio, about respect and tolerance. Protecting people from discrimination, including people who are gay or transgender, is about treating others as we want to be treated. Having this rule reflected in Ohio law means that all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, are respected and protected from discrimination in the workplace, in housing, and in their communities. No hard-working person deserves to be kicked out of a business or their home just because of who they are.

I strongly urge you to vote yes on SB 11 so that EVERY Ohioan, not just those that are straight and cisgender, feel welcomed and respected at work and in their community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.