

November 28th, 2022

Dear Chairwoman Manchester, Vice Chairman Cutrona, Ranking Member Denson and Distinguished Members of the Families, Aging, and Human Services Committee,

First, thank you for allowing me to testify in Opposition to House Bill 496. As a mother of four and concerned citizen, I would ask that you consider voting no on this bill.

For the last 10 years, I have been able to choose who I want as a care provider for my pregnancy care, birth care and postnatal care. I have safely given birth to all four of my children at home, thanks to that freedom. As many of us may know, the act of becoming a parent is one of the most life changing experiences out there. When a person is restricted on who they give birth with, where they seek prenatal care or postpartum care, it can change the entire experience. The government should not be able to dictate that experience for them. I am thankful I have had the freedom to choose who my care provider was for all of my children. I was able to give birth on my own terms. I took the time and energy to find resources and educate myself on my options. When people do not have the option to choose, they are less likely to seek education. Why would someone take time and energy to understand their options, if the government has already chosen for them?

I am thankful for the freedom to choose. I hope my children will have the same option when they have their own children. I think Ohio would be hurting future generations by the passing of this legislation. If you care about empowering the younger generation and protecting our children, our grandchildren and our great grandchildren, I would urge you to vote no on House Bill 496. Giving birth and being born is such a life changing experience and a person should always have the freedom to choose. I urge you to vote NO on House Bill 496. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Taleitha A Selby