

To the Ohio House Higher Education Committee
April 19, 2023

House Bill 6
Opposition Testimony
Written Only

To Chair Young, Ranking Member Miller, and Members of the House Higher Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition of House Bill 6. **As an Ohioan, as a queer person, and as someone who like you cares very deeply for the future of Ohio: I ask you to vote no on House Bill 6.**

I am a community organizer based in Cleveland, and I have dedicated a great deal of my life to improving conditions for my community. I have served on the board of the Plexus LGBT & Allied Chamber of Commerce, helped a former employer create an LGBTQ+ employee resource group, and I am a cofounder of the Cleveland Bisexual Network.

House Bill 6 insists that Ohio's schools, colleges, and universities inscribe discrimination into their athletic programming, and it does so without cause. The idea of banning trans student athletes has been raised in this Statehouse before, and no student athlete testified in favor of the idea. The Ohio High School Athletic Association and the NCAA have been providing regulations and oversight to ensure safe participation for all student athletes in Ohio for years without any incident. Why must the Ohio legislature create problems where none exist?

Trans students are not any different than your children, grandchildren, or any of the young people you know in your own life. Trans students are young people who want to gain confidence, gain a skill set, gain social opportunities, and all the other positive developments that engaging in school sports can bring.

I find it appalling that the legislature would find our less-than-one-dozen current trans student athletes and their participation in school sports to be so dangerous that a law must be passed not just against them, but against the leagues in which they play, the schools that allow them to play, and the governing bodies that regulate their play.

The solution I offer in place of this discriminatory, bigoted, baseless, and biased bill is to allow the Ohio High School Athletic Association to regulate high school athletics, and to allow the NCAA to regulate collegiate athletics. I see no cause to believe they are incapable of it.

At the same time as Governor DeWine is pressuring TourismOhio to do something about the continual brain drain of Ohio's students, young people, and families, the Ohio legislature is producing bills that make people like me feel hated and scared. **Please stop chasing families like mine out of our hometowns.**

I beg you to vote NO ON HOUSE BILL 6.

Thank you,

Elaine Schleiffer (she/her)