

Opponent Testimony for HB 183
Ohio House of Representatives Higher Education Committee
October 9th, 2023

Alexander “Xandra” Aloï

Chair Tom Young, Vice Chair Gayle Manning, Ranking Member Joseph A. Miller, III, and members of the Ohio House of Representatives Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My legal name is Alexander Aloï .For several years now, I have gone by “Xandra” and used she/her pronouns. I am transgender woman who has lived in Ohio my entire life. I am here to oppose House Bill 183.

When I see discussions of bills such as House Bill 183 on television or read them online, there is usually a focus on whether or not the supposed threat that transgender women like myself present is legitimate. Overwhelmingly, the evidence says that it is not. But I want to focus on a different aspect of these bills that has not been talked about to nearly the intent that it should be: the fear they instill in transgender individuals.

At the moment, I am legally allowed to use the bathroom associated with my preferred gender. However, I almost never do so out of fear. I have seen videos of people accosted in bathrooms by random strangers attempting to “unmask” transgender “predators.” Many times, the people that they accost aren’t even transgender, but simply are not dressing the way that is considered normal for their assigned sex at birth. Nevertheless, having seen the damage that a lone individual can do, I have become afraid of using the women’s restroom out of fear that I might be accosted or assaulted myself. One the rare occasion that I do use a public restroom designated for women, it is only with my cisgender allies present and only when I am presenting particularly feminine. Even then, fear grips my heart, and I usually leave in a hurry. This is in spite of having been out as a transgender woman for several years with the full support of my friends and family.

When I think of how afraid I am even without being affected by a bill such as this, I cannot help but be afraid for any college student who, having reached legal adulthood, decides to explore their gender identity. I have the luxury of a supportive community to keep me safe, but even if a student were to have a community such as mine on their campus, this bill would hamper that community’s ability to protect them, thereby limiting the student’s access to a public utility the vast majority of people take for granted.

This bill affects both children and legal adults who might explore their gender identity in an educational setting which is designed to be supportive and accommodating to students of diverse backgrounds and needs. I ask that you please consider my testimony and vote no.

Thank you. I’m happy to answer any questions.