

October 7, 2023

Dear Ohio House Higher Education Committee,

I am writing to implore you to oppose HB 183, which would ban transgender and nonbinary individuals from using the school facilities of their gender. As a mother and a person of Christian faith, I believe it is our duty to love *all* children and help them thrive no matter how they identify - not to create additional barriers that cause harm or further ostracize people for their differences.

Transgender people simply want the same access, opportunities, respect, and dignity that I expect for my own children. Going to the bathroom where they are most comfortable is frankly none of our business, not to mention the enforcement challenges this will create or the increased suspicion, paranoia, and harassment for anyone who may not fit into typical gender roles. Will you start requiring that our children have to show their birth certificate first, or do you plan to designate someone to check students' genitalia before they are allowed to use the bathroom? If you give this one moment of deeper thought, it is clearly misguided and quite a disturbing use of your time and power.

We have *real* issues in our community – education, childcare, gun violence. We need true leadership that will focus on finding solutions, instead of fabricating issues and targeting an already marginalized and misunderstood part of our community. Do the right thing, do the compassionate thing – take a stand against hate, fear, and ignorance, and oppose HB 183.

The ministry of Jesus never denigrated or excluded anyone. Instead, He affirmed, loved, included, and lifted up those who were marginalized and misunderstood. The way we love others, particularly those who may be different from us, demonstrates our character and our faith - *not* what we stand against and who we leave out.

*“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” - John 13:35*

Sincerely,

*Rebecca Wiggins*

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