

Chairman Young and members of the Higher Education Committee

My name is Joseph J Sreenan, MD and I am here to provide proponent testimony in support of Ohio House Bill 183, which seeks to maintain single-sex bathroom facilities in schools and address concerns related to the affirmation of gender dysphoria in educational settings.

I would like to begin by stating that I firmly believe in the importance of providing a safe and supportive educational environment for all students. This includes respecting their privacy, dignity, and rights. Ohio House Bill 183, which prohibits the use of bathrooms by individuals of the opposite biological sex, is a reasonable step towards ensuring these rights for all students.

Privacy and Safety: Maintaining single-sex bathrooms is essential to safeguarding the privacy and security of all students. For many students, especially those in their formative years, sharing bathrooms with individuals of the opposite sex can lead to feelings of discomfort, anxiety, or even fear. This can have a detrimental impact on their overall well-being and ability to focus on their education.

Psychiatric Help for Gender Dysphoria: It is crucial to recognize that students experiencing gender dysphoria may need appropriate mental health and counseling services. Providing psychiatric help for these students is a compassionate and responsible approach. Rather than immediately affirming gender dysphoria, which can be a complex issue with long-term consequences, schools should prioritize addressing the underlying mental health needs and providing comprehensive support.

Parental Rights: House Bill 183 also respects the rights of parents to be involved in decisions regarding their child's education and well-being. Allowing students to use bathrooms that align with their biological sex at birth preserves the rights of parents to make choices that are in the best interests of their children.

Fairness and Equity: This bill ensures fairness and equity for all students. It acknowledges that different individuals may have different comfort levels and beliefs regarding gender identity and biological sex. It is not discriminatory but rather aims to strike a balance between the rights and concerns of all students.

In conclusion, I believe that Ohio House Bill 183 is a reasonable and balanced approach to address the concerns surrounding bathroom usage in schools. It promotes privacy, safety, and the mental well-being of all students while respecting parental rights and individual beliefs. By also prioritizing appropriate mental health support for students experiencing gender dysphoria, we can ensure that all students receive the care and attention they need to thrive in their educational environments.

I urge this committee to consider the well-being and rights of all students in Ohio and support House Bill 183.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Joseph J Sreenan, MD