

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Stewart, Ranking member Listen and members of the Public Health Policy Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of House Bill 68, otherwise known as the SAFE Act.

My name is Xandra and I am a detransitioned woman. I came out as a transgender man when I was in high school, and spent the following ten years attempting to transition into a man. Because I didn't have the financial stability or support, I was never able to go beyond the use of testosterone, which lasted four years. The use of testosterone has had long lasting physical and mental consequences that I continue to deal with to this day. Some of this includes facial hair growth and a deepened voice. Years of chest binding has also created back pain and problems with posture, and possible damage to tissue that would prevent me from breastfeeding. If I had been allowed to medically transition in high school, I would likely have far more physical health ailments today.

The doctor that prescribed me testosterone, did so despite me disclosing my history of mental and emotional issues, including that I had been sexually assaulted as a child, raped in high school, and was actively recovering from a self inflicted injury which required emergency surgery. I also disclosed that I struggled with alcoholism since I was fourteen and was not financially stable. Instead of advising me to seek therapy, get sober, or even to make some lifestyle changes first, I left her office with a prescription for testosterone and bipolar medications. All it took was one brief questionnaire and a signature. My mental health was never taken into any serious consideration, and I never saw a therapist prior to receiving hormones. After several years of hormones, I attempted suicide, realizing that I had lost my entire twenties attempting to pursue the impossible. It was only after the decision to detransition that I sought serious mental help.

I admit to being an adult when I made the decision to transition medically, and therefore a law like HB 68 would not apply to me. This is true in the same way that increasing the legal age to smoke cigarettes did not affect me. It is not about me, it is about preventing harm to future generations, harm that I have seen and experienced first hand. testosterone was a chemical that I came to depend on and without it, my body suffered withdrawals. Once my body had shut off its natural production of hormones, it relied on an injection every week to feel "normal". This is physical dependence. Addiction, no matter the chemical, should never be treated with affirmation.

A law like HB68 implies that an adult should know better. If I, an adult who should know better, can make such a life-altering mistake, it should go without saying that a minor should not be trusted with that risk. Hormones applied to minors have far more severe and permanent effects than they do on a grown adult, and surgeries are irreversible no matter the age. I can begrudgingly accept that adults will do what they do, but minors should never have access to hormones or surgeries to aid in their gender transition.

This is an issue that is affecting children and teens all across the United States. What is currently being dealt with on state levels should be dealt with on a national level. I have several

nieces and nephews here in Ohio that are at vulnerable and impressionable ages, and I hope none will ever choose to go down the long and difficult path of transition. This bill would prevent them and many others from considering life altering medical decisions that they are incapable of understanding. It would allow them to grow up innocent and whole. It would give them time to be properly informed. Dysphoria is real, and should be taken seriously through proper therapy, but should never involve taking a child and turning them into a lifelong medical patient with sterilizing drugs and surgeries.

Thank you for listening to my testimony, and please vote in favor of this bill.