

Opposition Testimony HB 68
Public Health Policy Committee

May 24, 2023

Submitted by: Shannon Gallagher Columbus, Ohio

Chair Lipps, Vice Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Liston and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me to present my testimony in opposition to House Bill 68. My name is Shannon Gallagher and I live in Columbus, OH. I am the mother of four children, a former middle school teacher and I currently work for a nonprofit. I have sat thru all the hearings of HB 68 and have been forced to sit quietly while hearing outright lies and hate speech from pastors, legislators, “experts” from out of state and many other witnesses. I acknowledge that I have seen some proponents who are in emotional pain and I recognize and respect that pain. That being said, I trust that most parents want and try to do right by their

children. I expect that same consideration given to me as a parent. As an American, I understand that to include: where my kids go to school, what babysitter to hire, what recreational activities they can participate in and for sure what their needs are for physical and mental health care. I will tell you, none of these decisions are made in a vacuum. I do my own research; I discuss with my husband; and I listen to my children to best understand their needs and desires. Then depending on the situation, I seek out the experts in those areas and get their professional opinions, and I take all that information in and I make an educated decision on what I think is best for each situation for my children. Nowhere in that process do I want to talk with my legislator. My youngest is an amazingly talented, smart, loving, empathetic and generous 16-year-old who happens to also

be Trans Non-binary. I will move my entire family out of this state before I will ever let a legislative body deny any of my children physical, emotional or mental health care services. And yes, this has been discussed by all 6 members of my immediate family and yes we all agree that what you are proposing to do with HB 68 is a gross overreach by the government. I ask you to let me retain my parental rights by voting no on HB 68. Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer any questions.