

PDF Version of Testimony for 5.23.23 Opponent hearing on HB 68 in Ohio House.

Hi there.

I work and live here in Columbus, Ohio. I've done so for the past 6 years now, and I've been a resident of Ohio all my life. I am writing today to express my opposition to HB68.

I feel like all House legislative initiatives should be under the utmost scrutiny these days. The Householder conviction has reduced my confidence to near zero.

Last session's HB454 has been resubmitted as HB 68 for this session (<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/hb68>)

It has been accurately reported that Gary Click didn't consult any actual trans people for his HB454. ([https://urldefense.com/v3/https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2022/07/13/ohio-rep-behind-bill-limiting-transgender-care-had-never-spoken-to-community/";!!AC6e5FAR!1urahCZTEjwQkq-zekH-77lxJM6welFi8Wa-sMshBlieBAG9zzTgcxtwCR7RTZUxsyIQB3o4dWOaGAwTFXciHAEoAju983Jdvw\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2022/07/13/ohio-rep-behind-bill-limiting-transgender-care-had-never-spoken-to-community/))

With the Householder conviction and the evidence of bills being put forth with no actual impacted community consultation, why would I believe any more thought, care, or concern has been put into HB68?

Gary Click, during proponent testimony on February 16th, said "I was asked to carry this bill by parents and by the Center for Christian Virtue." when responding to Rep. Beth Liston's question about who was behind this bill. Minutes later, he went on to say "This bill does not have religious motivations." (<https://thebuckeyeflame.com/2022/02/17/14-of-the-most-memorable-quotes-from-todays-hearing-on-hb-454-to-ban-trans-youth-from-accessing-medical-care/>)

If HB68 was not religiously motivated, then it would consider the viewpoints and lived experiences of other religions and cultures. Because it will affect everyone in the state of Ohio, and Ohio is not monotheistic or one homogenous culture.

Life is inherently non-binary. Many cultures have ancient histories of non-binary expression. The Hijra's of India, the Muxes of Oaxaca, and the Mahu of Hawaii, just to name a few.

(<https://rpl.hds.harvard.edu/religion-context/case-studies/gender/third-gender-and-hijras>)

(<https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/muxes-mexico-gender-binary-cec/index.html#:~:text=Muxes%2C%20a%20group%20long%20recognized,deeply%20entrenched%20in%20Western%20society.>)

(<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/hawaii-museum-revisits-history-gender-fluid-healers-rcna37284>)

This bill is proposed as "saving adolescents". That's an inherently antagonistic lens,

casting the problem as all these 'legislative saviors' "saving" adolescents. How can we ever actually move forward with love and acceptance when the very language and framing of the current legislature casts seeing life and gender non-binarily as the "enemy"?

Let's talk about HB68's and HB6's vile synergy for a second.

The Ohio High School Athletic Association and NCAA have policies in place to ensure that sports are fair and accessible to all. I believe the current Ohio High School Athletic Association and NCAA policies are reasonable.

(<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/OtherEligibilityDocs/TransgenderPolicy.pdf>)

Ohio is a step ahead of the most authoritarian states in this union. The current policies on participating in women's sport are reasonably fair when considering Ohio's current level of access to gender affirming youth healthcare.

Studies show that estrogen has a significant impact on the body and its ability to perform physical actions

([https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33648944/_;!!AC6e5FAr!](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33648944/_;!!AC6e5FAr!1urahCZTEjwQkq-zekH-77lxJM6welFi8Wa-)

[sMshBlieBAG9zzTgcxtwCR7RTZUxsyIQB3o4dWOaGAWTFXciHAEoAjvseMUbuw\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33648944/_;!!AC6e5FAr!1urahCZTEjwQkq-zekH-77lxJM6welFi8Wa-sMshBlieBAG9zzTgcxtwCR7RTZUxsyIQB3o4dWOaGAWTFXciHAEoAjvseMUbuw$)).

It's stated in the study that there was some retention of strength capacity, but here's the thing. This study was done on adults. If transgender youth had access to knowledge and care that allowed them to grow into themselves the way that's right for them, by which I mean hormone therapy, puberty blockers, and the other medically accepted safe tools to allow a young person to grow according to their gender identity, then this whole issue would be moot.

Young transgender people provided access to the appropriate medical options would be able to grow in accordance with the already reasonable OHSAA and NCAA policies. There is no need for HB6 or anything like it if trans youth healthcare is protected in Ohio and the OHSAA and NCAA continue to utilize their current policies.

What is HB68 even doing here if not providing the mechanism to eradicate adolescent's ability to express their true selves and interact with people in a meaningfully socially transitioned way?

As a little evidence, from the Buckeye Flame article earlier,

"This bill is not about social transitioning," -Rep. Click, around 40 minutes before directly saying that the school-related portion of the bill forcing school staff to out trans youth to parents was because there are schools that support the social transition of trans youth during school hours.'

This is where the larger issue of that vile synergy I mentioned comes in. I believe it is intended that HB 6 and HB 68 pass together. These two bills, and what they open the

doors for, seek to completely erase transness, queerness, and eventually homosexuality broadly, all together, let alone just from sports or adolescents.

The bills seem to conjecture that if they can squash the ability adolescents have to be their authentic queer selves, then there won't be any queer selves. That simply isn't true.

I can appreciate that the above statement could be categorized and dismissed as hysteric so allow me to point to the fresh Missouri AG Bailey's emergency regulation, effective April 27 and expiring next year, bans transgender people of all ages in Missouri from accessing gender-affirming health care without having exhibited three years of a "medically documented, long-lasting, persistent and intense pattern of gender dysphoria" while also requiring health care providers to ensure annually that a patient's gender identity is not being influenced by social media or their peers. In addition, those seeking access to gender-affirming health care must also be screened for autism, and any existing comorbidities like anxiety and depression must be "treated and resolved" before treatment is administered. (<https://thehill.com/homenews/state-watch/3949521-missouri-ag-issues-emergency-order-restricting-gender-affirming-health-care/#:~:text=Under%20Bailey's%20emergency%20regulation%2C%20which,intense%20pattern%20of%20gender%20dysphoria.%E2%80%9D>)

While I acknowledge that a judge suspended this regulation (<https://apnews.com/article/transgender-health-missouri-lawsuit-fb59ee86b950c0f6ca2f54368f3e4aea>) that doesn't erase the fact it happened or that there are people in legislatures in this country who will continue to push this type of legislation.

The requirements are obviously written by a group that did not consult any actual trans people. Anxiety and depression are direct results of gender dysphoria, notably in places where transness and queerness are painted in an inherently antagonistic lens. (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/gender-dysphoria/#:~:text=Gender%20dysphoria%20is%20a%20term,harmful%20impact%20on%20daily%20life.>)

So no, I do not believe it is appropriate to dismiss the obvious cause and effect of bills like HB6 and HB68 as slippery-slope fallacy. There is a clear precedent of moving from small transgender youth bans to larger wholesale trans bans. I don't think I need to describe the logical end point of these initiatives, but it certainly isn't acknowledging that trans people are people, and that all people need love, care, support, and acceptance.

Ohio is reasonably a step ahead of the most authoritarian states in this union. The Ohio High School Athletic Association and NCAA policies on participating in women's sport are reasonably fair when considering Ohio's current level of access to trans youth healthcare. They too could become cruel shams of policy depending on things like HB68 coming to pass.

Don't let Ohio become one of the worst places in the union to be a young person, let alone a young trans person. If HB68 passes we all know that HB 6 is not far behind and what does that make us? One of the most dangerous places to be a youth, because every youth is entitled to their own identity, transgender or otherwise.

Thank you for your time.