

**Testimony of Mimi Plevin-Foust
Regarding HB 68
Enact Ohio Saving Adolescents from
Experimentation (SAFE) Act
House Public Health Policy Committee**

Chairman Lipps, Vice-Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Liston: As an Ohio parent and mother of a child with several transgender friends, I'm testifying to say I'm outraged by HB 68. This so-called "SAFE Act" would actively harm the safety and well-being of LGBTQ+ youth. The medical profession has proven conclusively that gender-affirming care saves lives. I urge you to look into your conscience and then vote 'No' on this cruel, deceptive, and ignorant bill.

HB 68 puts highly vulnerable LGBTQ+ youth at risk of losing access to vital, best-practice healthcare, including mental health care. HB 68 wildly misrepresents the slow, respectful, and cautious standards of care now in use. In fact, this bill would forcibly re-transition all transgender youth in our state.

For all those reasons, I would define this legislation as deliberate torture, a crime against humanity, and a form of genocide: HB 68 denies trans children their right to exist in our state just as the Nazis gradually denied that right to Jews. HB 68 and the wide array of anti-trans legislation proposed in this statehouse pretend to protect but actually discriminate against a small, powerless group of Ohioans just as the Nazis targeted Jews, Roma, and homosexuals.

Let me ask each of you a question: When you reach the end of your life, will you want a vote for a bill that tells Ohio children that they have no right to proper medical care or even the right to exist weighing like an anvil on your conscience? A vote for a bill devised and propagated by callous, bigoted, anti-democracy billionaires from other states with no regard for Ohio's children and families? Would you want that vote highlighted in your obituary?

In addition to the harm HB 68 will inflict on young people and caring professionals, this legislation would upend the lives of countless Ohio families since many will be forced to leave their jobs, homes, relatives, and friends and flee Ohio to protect their children. You can bet that most businesses will think twice or thrice before moving to a state with such cruel and backwards laws.

Finally, if you think passing laws denying medical care to children is in any way a 'Christian' policy, you are dead wrong. The entire gospel is a story of Christ accepting and offering food and healing to those that society had rejected or overlooked - the poor, the lepers, the adulterers, etc. Nowhere in the Bible do you find Jesus saying, "Those who don't fit my childhood ideas about gender, should be denied needed medical care."

The so-called SAFE Act isn't safe. It isn't Christian. It doesn't come from Ohio or address the real needs of Ohio's children for consistent meals, safe neighborhoods, well-funded schools, love, acceptance, and dependable, affordable roofs over their heads. HB 68 is deceptive, deliberately ignorant of current medical practices, and criminally cruel.

For the sake of Ohio's children and your own legacy and ability to sleep at night, stop persecuting trans children and their families in this Statehouse. Stop letting radical, out-of-state, out-of-touch billionaires meddle in the private decisions of Ohio families. Vote NO on HB 68 and bury it forever.