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My name is Anastasia Tonti Kimbler, I reside in Hebron, Ohio. I am the parent of a child who identifies as nonbinary. I am addressing the house representatives to express my direct opposition to H.B. 68, which claims to intend to “protect” children from receiving life-saving care that helps their physical bodies align with their internal identities. As a parent and a medical professional, it enrages me to think of any entity outside of my child, myself and my partner as the child’s parents, and our team of medical professionals who have undergone years of training and are up to date with the most current, relevant, evidence-based practice, being involved in making decisions about the healthcare my child receives.

Transgender people, particularly children, are an especially vulnerable population due to the ignorance and prejudice in our society that they come face to face with, on top of already struggling with self-image and their identities. Bills like this perpetuate that ignorance and will make it even more difficult for this population to access care that can literally save lives by helping these children pause their hormonal development while they determine their identity, or help their bodies express the features that reflect who they really are. LGBTQ+ youth, especially transgender youth, are at increased risk of suicidality compared to cisgender and non-LGBTQ+ youth. It is also worth noting that children and adults that identify as their gender assigned at birth also utilize these therapies for various conditions. All medical therapies and procedures have potential side effects. An informed decision is made after review of potential side effects and complications that is between the medical team and the patient. You cannot claim to know how gender dysphoria affects someone and the level of distress it causes a person to weigh the risks and benefits for them, nor are you qualified to discuss risks and benefits with the patient/client and their family to make an informed decision with which to choose to proceed with a therapeutic process, as you are not a member of their medical team. Please leave this to the trained professionals.

If you really claim to want to save children, I urge you to stop worrying about childrens’ genitals, which are none of your business, and focus on what’s really hurting children, which, according to the CDC is primarily firearm-related deaths. Thank you.