

May 18, 2023

The Ohio House of Representatives  
Public Health Policy Committee

Dear Committee Members,

As a mother and a person of Christian faith, I implore you to oppose HB 68 and reject these fear-based distractions. It is our duty to love *all* children and help them thrive no matter how they identify - not to create additional challenges that take away people's rights and cause additional harm. The ministry of Jesus never denigrated or excluded anyone. Instead, he affirmed, loved, and included those who were marginalized and misunderstood.

The transgender children in my life are talented, bright, and creative. They have hopes and dreams for their futures and are an important part of our family and community. Being transgender does not define or change who they are, nor does it determine their value. They deserve the same access, opportunities, respect, and dignity that I want for my own children.

HB 68 unconstitutionally limits parents' ability to make healthcare decisions for their children and goes against recommendations of every major medical association for how to treat and support people with gender dysphoria. Like all children, transgender children have the best chance to thrive when they are supported and can access the health care that best meets their needs.

Data indicate that 82% of transgender individuals have considered killing themselves and 40% have attempted suicide, with suicidality highest among transgender youth. Research shows gender-affirming care improves physical and mental health, as well as the overall well-being of children and youth when families and medical professionals work together in making health care decisions.

The way we love others, particularly those who may be different from us, demonstrates our character and our faith - *not* what we stand against and who we leave out.

We need true leadership that will ensure all our children get the care and support they need under the safety and guidance of their families and expertise of their physicians – people who will focus on real issues that impact our community like education, healthcare, and jobs.

Do the right thing, do the compassionate thing – take a stand against hate, fear, and ignorance, and oppose HB68. *“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another”* - John 13:35

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca A. Wiggins".

Rebecca Wiggins