

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to submit my written testimony in opposition to HB 68. This document contains my testimony, and my witness form is attached.

I am wholeheartedly opposed the HB 68 because of the threat it represents to the health and safety of transgender minors. The care of any individual is best decided by that individual themselves with the guidance of their doctors and without interference from the state. In the case of a minor child, I believe that child's parents should also be involved in these important decisions, which current legislation already mandates.

The American Medical Association has called this type of legislation "a dangerous intrusion into the practice of medicine." They further reference a 2018 study that indicates that gender affirming care protects against declines in mental health and improves relationships with parents and peers. Additionally, a 2005 study shows that access to gender-affirming care decreases suicide rates among transgender adolescents and decreases depression and anxiety. Being able to accurately express their gender is a matter of life or death for these individuals. I worry about the negative effects losing this type of care will have on the children of Ohio who need it.

The safeguards for preventing abuse or recklessness of treatment are already firmly in place in Ohio, and additional legislation is not needed to ensure the safe application of gender affirming care.

I urge you to remember that the pursuit of happiness is enshrined in the Constitution of the United States of America. Please set aside your personal biases about this issue and allow transgender children, their parents, and their doctors the authority to choose how best to thrive and move forward.

Thank you for your time,
Angela Hay