

**Opponent Testimony for HB 68  
House Public Health Policy Committee  
June 14, 2023**

**Joanna Schroeder, Concerned Ohioan**

Chair P. Scott Lipps, Vice Chair Brian Stewart, Ranking Member Beth Liston, and members of the Committee.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Joanna Schroeder, she/her. I am a 46 year old queer person and lifelong Ohioan. I love Ohio –the cities, the farms, the sports teams. I am offering testimony in opposition to HB 68.

I lost my dad last October. He loved Ohio as much as I do. When I was a kid, he walked me to school, he took me to baseball games, he took me to Urgent Care when we thought my ankle was broken. Then he had a heart attack on his way to work at Progressive Field and spent several months in various Cleveland area hospitals. It was a sad and overwhelming time, but the one thing we could count on was being able to trust the doctors and nurses who were taking care of him. This is a story about trust. About trusting parents, like my dad, and doctors like the ones who took care of him, to be the ones who decide the best course of treatment for Ohio children.

Having the state get involved in prohibiting vital medical care for trans youth will make Ohio a more dangerous place for trans youth. It won't reduce the number of trans kids in Ohio, it will just make their lives more difficult and more dangerous. When I was growing up, many of the scare tactics being invoked against the trans community now were being used against the gay community in general. It's not about science or medicine, both of which support gender affirming care. It's about bigotry. It's about fearing the diversity that is one of Ohio's greatest strengths.

I'm offering this testimony because I care about Ohio, about our future as a state, and about the trans youth and their families who do not deserve to have major medical decisions made by politicians rather than doctors.

I ask that you please consider my testimony and vote no on HB 68.

Thank you.

