

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HOUSE BILL 68 – “Saving Adolescents from Experimentation (SAFE) Act.”

To Chair Lipps, Vice-Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Liston and all members of the Public Health Policy Committee,

My name is Tennessee Sundermeyer. I have lived in Ohio my whole life—I was born in Columbus and moved to Cincinnati in 2018 where I currently reside. I am writing to tell you that I strongly oppose House Bill 68. I do not think that it serves the people or public good of Ohio. I attended the initial hearing for this bill in April and bore witness to both Representative Click’s spurious claims and the committee’s multiple refutations of his claims. One of his primary sources, the American College of Pediatricians (ACP), has been confirmed to be a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center, pushing “anti-LGBTQ junk science,” per the SPLC’s briefing. The SPLC is a trustworthy source on this with over fifty years of experience promoting justice in the United States; their opinion should be weighed heavily when considering legislation that involves a hate group the SPLC has identified.

Per the arguments represented the first day this bill was proposed in April, Rep. Click is giving undue weight to the ACP’s opinions and giving short shrift to the rest of the pediatric community’s opinions on gender affirming care. In particular, the American Medical Association, an expert organization with over a century and a half of history, which the Southern Poverty Law Center has not designated as a hate group, has vocally supported the effectiveness of gender-affirming care in improving the lives of human beings. I always want my legislation to be informed by expert opinions, and I do not think that HB68 properly accounts for a holistic view of the science of gender-affirming care.

The fact that Rep. Click has opposed transgender identities as a whole in his sermons similarly concerns me because it indicates that House Bill 68 is motivated by an ideology that opposes a certain kind of person, rather than one that supports the wellbeing of Ohio citizenry. If Rep. Click is to be a servant of the people of Ohio, he should be finding ways to spend his time improving others’ lives, not restricting what they can do—life and liberty that should be guaranteed to them by the government, not taken away from them through claims that were not properly evaluated.

Something that I greatly admire about Ohio is that people here are motivated, creative, and intelligent. I know that the right decision will be made if all viewpoints are accounted for and the most effective and reputable sources are given the credit that they deserve.

Kind regards,

Tennessee Sundermeyer