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Chair Andrew Brenner
House Primary and Secondary Education Committee
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square
1st Floor, 140
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chair Brenner and House Education Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 8 (HB 8) and urge you to vote against its passage. As a concerned citizen, I believe that this bill poses significant threats to the safety, well-being, and rights of LGBTQ+ students and staff in Ohio schools.

HB 8 claims to establish a fundamental right for parents to make decisions concerning their children's upbringing, education, and care. However, it goes much further than protecting parental rights and instead introduces harmful provisions that undermine existing civil rights protections for LGBTQ+ individuals.

The bill's addition of a definition of sex that contradicts Supreme Court precedents and Title IX laws is deeply concerning. By explicitly targeting LGBTQ+ discrimination protections for employees and students, HB 8 puts LGBTQ+ individuals at risk of harm and discrimination within educational settings.

Furthermore, the bill's prohibitions on "sexuality content" that is deemed "not age-appropriate" and the requirement for parental consent to health care services create barriers to inclusive and comprehensive education and healthcare for LGBTQ+ students. These provisions not only stigmatize LGBTQ+ identities but also jeopardize the safety and well-being of students who may be questioning their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Additionally, the onerous notice and complaint process outlined in HB 8 could create a culture of intimidation and targeting of educators, further chilling discussions on LGBTQ+ topics and undermining the ability of teachers to provide inclusive and affirming environments for all students.

We must prioritize the safety, well-being, and rights of all students, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. HB 8 does not align with these principles and instead perpetuates discrimination and harm against LGBTQ+ individuals in our schools.

I urge you to stand against HB 8 and protect the rights and dignity of LGBTQ+ students and staff in Ohio schools. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

