

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Government Oversight Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to House Bill 68. My name is Ada and I am a concerned constituent. I am a resident of Cincinnati, in Hamilton County, and am an Ohio native who's lived here for most of my life.

This testimony comes in two parts: the first commenting on the gender-affirming care ban aspects of the bill, and the second commenting on the sports ban aspects.

Growing up, I wanted to learn everything.

I also assumed adults knew everything when I was around 5, so I took them at their word on what gender I was—though I still wondered about gender, especially what life would be like as a girl. Those feelings intensified quite a bit around puberty—wondering why I felt mentally more like a teenage girl sometimes, wondering why I was so weirdly bummed out about not being a girl. I got the impression my body didn't matter at all—that I was just a shell going through the motions holding my mind. Testosterone/male puberty felt like ice creeping through my body, slowly twisting and freezing me solid.

When I did start to come out, first to myself, it was like night and day. I learned new things—that it was possible to live and exist as a woman, that we had well-studied hormone treatments to make my body feel like home, that it was possible to come out socially. My family accepted me when I came out to them, and somehow my coming out caused a cascade that ended up repairing my parents' marriage. Living out as myself has honestly been incredibly fulfilling, and my only regret taking estradiol is that I didn't start it *sooner*.

Denying trans teenagers—as well as to deny supportive parents the chance to help their children live their best life—is to deny them deep joys and inflict on them deep pains like depersonalization and alienating, life-long changes to their bodies. Puberty blockers exist to help give questioning kids time to question, hormone-replacement therapy helps trans people function and makes our bodies closer to your normal. My (cisgender) mom has commented more than once that we take the exact same estradiol/meds—they're just as safe for both of us.

To paraphrase a Dr. Seuss quote I heard over and over at Catholic school growing up: “people are people, no matter how small.” We're here, we exist, and we'd very much prefer kids like us to not be drowned in hot beezlenut oil or isolated and left to rot in our own bodies until we self-destruct.

Growing up, I wanted to learn everything.

One of the things I took best to learning was math—and so I did math competitions. In middle school this was MathCounts; in high school I believe it was the AMC 10 and AMC 12.

MathCounts was a very fun activity for me growing up—we didn't have athletic sports teams at our small Catholic grade/middle school, so we supported our mathlete team instead. It was a competition based around thinking fast, cleverly applying what you knew, learned, and practiced to solve puzzles and understand them better. For the right kind of brain, that was catnip—and I was good at it. It felt like my mind was dancing like lightning, sprinting from idea to idea like a runner, exhausted but satisfied at the

end. I ended up bringing my team to state a few times, first in middle school and then in high school math competitions.

I'm not sure it would have counted as a sport under the new bill, but I know I'd have been crushed if I'd known I was trans as a kid or teenager and was suddenly banned from MathCounts, AMC 10, or AMC 12. I know that it probably would have been much harder to get into college had I never had the chance to reach state, and I did make some needed friends and connections there.

You might argue "but biology" for the physical sports--aside from there being existing systems for high school sports in place that take into account the nuances of things like hormone access (which brings our physical potential as transgender women to cisgender woman ranges), we have people banning trans women from chess competitions. There is no biological advantage there--just a bunch of people who think that having been born with certain bits makes you a god at everything (and not just some physical strengths that can easily be mitigated or negated with hormone treatment).

There's a lot more I could say besides what I have thus far.

But the biggest thing I can say is that this bill is just unnecessary. It is cruel, isolating, and learns only what it can to make our lives miserable out of fear and disgust for us.

Please learn from both parts of my testimony--vote no on House Bill 68.

Please support policies that uphold rights and dignity for transgender people, ensure our access to needed healthcare, and participate in sports consistent with our gender identity.

Thank you for your consideration,
Ada