

Jax Kim HB68 Testimony

Hello. My name is Jax Kim. I am 21 years old, I go to The Ohio State University, I enjoy gardening, art, music, and archery. And I am trans. The fact that I am trans should not be something that shock or discomfort to you. It should be the same as if I were to say I am a violinist or am a college student. Being trans is simply another identifier, another description of myself.

Ohio House Bill 68 is an attack on our children on two fronts. It first bans gender affirming care for our trans youth, and it secondly bans trans children from playing sports as the gender they identify as. It's formal name is the Saving Adolescents from Experimentation Act.

Firstly, we must tackle its title. It implies that adolescents are being experimented on. That we are making them test subjects to further scientific discovery. This is simply incorrect. Gender affirming care is not an experiment on children, and allowing children to play sports as the gender they identify as only serves to make sports accessible. Nobody is experimenting on children.

Gender affirming care is often thought of as hormones and surgery. This is not true. Gender affirming care includes calling a person by the name they wish to be called by. It includes using the correct pronouns. It involves recognizing a person as more than their genitals. Research overwhelmingly supports the use of gender affirming care for both trans and non-trans persons. For trans persons, gender affirming care helps them explore their identity. For non-trans persons, it can help them figure out if they are or aren't trans. Using the right name and pronouns is a form of social transitioning and is the first step in a person's exploration of gender. Before any form of hormones or surgery can even be considered, the trans community encourages social transitioning and exploration, regardless of if the person later figures out if they are or are not trans. This stage of gender affirming care and exploration is crucial in helping youth figure out their identities and helps prevent them from making decisions that they will later regret.

A meta-analysis conducted by the National Institute of Health done in 2021 researched the rate of trans and gender non-confirming individuals who regretted their decision to undergo gender affirming surgery. This analysis covered *27 studies, including almost 8000 transgender patients*. The rate of regret was *less than 1 percent*. Of the seven thousand nine hundred and twenty-eight patients who underwent any form of gender affirming surgery, only 77 regretted it. To be clear, an analysis of general surgery regret rates found that *over 14 percent* of patients regretted their decision for surgery. That is *one in 7 patients*.

Bustos, V. P., Bustos, S. S., Mascaro, A., Del Corral, G., Forte, A. J., Ciudad, P., Kim, E. A., Langstein, H. N., & Manrique, O. J. (2021). Regret after Gender-affirmation Surgery: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis of Prevalence. *Plastic and reconstructive surgery*, 9(3), e3477. <https://doi.org/10.1097/GOX.0000000000003477>

Wilson, A., Ronnekleiv-Kelly, S. M., & Pawlik, T. M. (2017). Regret in Surgical Decision Making: A Systematic Review of Patient and Physician Perspectives. *World journal of surgery*, 41(6), 1454–1465. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00268-017-3895-9>

Furthermore, gender affirming care is directly linked to lowering the rate of suicidality among transgender patients. One study found that prior to gender affirming care, *73.3 percent of patients reported suicidal ideation*. Once treatment was even initiated, that percentage *dropped to 43.4 percent*. Another study found a *60 percent lower odds of depression and a 73 percent lower odds of suicidality* among trans youth who had initiated gender affirming care when compared to those who didn't.

Jackson D. (2023). Suicide-Related Outcomes Following Gender-Affirming Treatment: A Review. *Cureus*, 15(3), e36425. <https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.36425>

Tordoff, D. M., Wanta, J. W., Collin, A., Stepney, C., Inwards-Breland, D. J., & Ahrens, K. (2022). Mental Health Outcomes in Transgender and Nonbinary Youths Receiving Gender-Affirming Care. *JAMA network open*, 5(2), e220978. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.0978>

As a trans person who first began exploring gender in high school, having others who helped me explore even just the social aspect of my transition greatly improved my mental health. The ability to explore pronouns and names other than those assigned at birth was *crucial* to helping me solidify and better understand not only my identity, but also myself.

Without the counselors and therapists who helped me explore my gender, I would not be here today.

Regarding transgender youth in sports, there is absolutely no evidence that trans youth have an advantage over their non-trans youth. Even at the collegiate level, they do not have an advantage. These claims that trans women have more testosterone or muscle mass or larger bone structure than their cisgender counterparts is a direct target on BIPOC athletes. Testosterone, muscle mass, and even bone structures between biological males and females are not binary. There is great variation and overlap between the two.

If it is an advantage for trans women to participate in women's sports, then why would trans men want to participate with the male team?

In fact, studies have shown that it is not testosterone that builds the most muscle, but rather the amount of androgen receptors, essentially how sensitive that one's muscles are to the testosterone.

Morton Robert W., Sato Koji, Gallagher Michael P. B., Oikawa Sara Y., McNicholas Paul D., Fujita Satoshi, Phillips Stuart M. (2018). Muscle Androgen Receptor Content but Not Systemic Hormones Is Associated With Resistance Training-Induced Skeletal Muscle Hypertrophy in Healthy, Young Men. *Frontiers in Physiology*. 9. 10.3389/fphys.2018.01373

This banning of trans women from women's sports directly impacts cisgender women athletes. For example, Caster Semenya, a South African 2 time Olympic Champion was *banned* from competing in women's sports unless she agreed to take medication to lower her naturally higher levels of testosterone.

<https://www.pinkmantaray.com/resources/transathlete>

Banning trans athletes does nothing for protecting sports. It only serves as a method to control women who are already competing.

House Bill 68 does not want to protect athletes or sports. It does not want to protect youth. It is a direct attack on those that you have deemed as less than human.