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Sen. Kristina Roegner, Chair
Senate Government Oversight Committee
Roegner@ohiosenate.gov

Dear Chair Roegner,:

I am providing this written testimony to strongly oppose HB 68.

Parents have a fundamental right to seek medical care for their children—whether they have cancer, broken bones, diseases, or yes, gender dysphoria. I find it incredibly egregious that many of the members of our state legislature who believe strongly that parents have a right to decide where their children go to school, or that they should not be forced to be vaccinated or wear masks during a pandemic, also believe that our state government has a right to dictate how, when and if parents can seek medical care for their children.

Treating this complex medical issue, as well as the mental health needs of transgender children should be a private matter between parents, their children, and medical professionals—and should in no way involve the government. **IT IS A PARENT'S RIGHT TO SEEK APPROPRIATE MEDICAL CARE FOR OUR CHILDREN.**

When our oldest son was diagnosed with a severe infection requiring around the clock medical care at Cincinnati Children's, I did not have to testify in front of our state legislature in order to seek medical treatment. When our youngest son was diagnosed with a brain tumor, I did not have to testify in front of our state legislature in order to seek medical treatment. And yet, when our daughter's gender dysphoria threatens to end her life, I am forced to testify and beg my government for the right to treat her. If you vote yes on HB 68, you are sacrificing freedom for religious extremists. You are playing politics on the backs of vulnerable children.

If this were your child, could you imagine sharing private, complex, and sensitive information with total strangers? With the government? If you are honest with yourselves, you also can't imagine such a scenario. And yet, that's exactly what you will force with this legislation.

Without the life-saving, gender affirming medical care provided by Cincinnati Children's Hospital, our daughter would have taken her own life. They saved her and they saved our family. If you let this bill come to a vote and it becomes law, the blood of countless transgender children will be on your hands. I urge you to stop this madness in the name of FREEDOM.

Sincerely,
Kelli M. Kurtz
Parent of a transgender child, opposing HB 68