

HB 68 Ohio's Ban on Gender-affirming Care and trans Youth in Sports
Wednesday December 6, 3:00 pm
Ohio Statehouse, South Hearing Room

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson and members of the Senate Government Oversight Committee my name is Kat Scaglione and I am submitting written testimony in opposition of House Bill 68.

I am a parent of three amazing kids, two of whom happen to be transgender girls. I am writing you with a heavy bag of emotions on my back. I am sad, scared, angry and most of all exhausted. Additionally, I am frustrated that while I should be preparing for the holidays and my kids are writing their Christmas lists-we are all instead writing testimony and dressing the worst.

Many of you may have kids. Parenting is hard. We all know it can be a rollercoaster in so many ways. Today I sit before you and ask you, why would I add challenges? Why would I complicate my family's life or allow my kids to put themselves in the center of such negativity if it didn't feel absolutely necessary and right? Parenting is hard, but choosing to love and support my children's authentic selves is not.

I get a lot of speculation for having two trans kids. People assume I've been pushing that life on them or that one child is copying a sibling. People talk about how it is trendy right now. The truth is, I actively denied and ignored my older child who came out following her younger sister. I actively gaslit and tried so hard to push that idea down. Not because I was against it or because I didn't believe her-but because I was scared. This country, and specifically Ohio are not a safe haven for trans people right now. I knew the challenges and the complications of what this would mean for her going forward. I am ashamed for behaving that way. I was supposed to be my daughter's advocate, her safe place, her support system, but I was so wrapped up in fear over the legislation and narratives about trans people I struggled to be the best mom I could be.

The hostility my daughter faced in middle school and blatant disregard for her identity was brutal. Despite being dropped by friends, disrespected by the school district and peers, she stood strong in who she is. She was willing to lose everything to stand in her truth. Shouldn't that speak volumes?

Flash forward, our family decided to move to a different school district. We wanted to give our kids the best shot at being kids and being in a safe environment so they could focus on school. We weren't prepared, we weren't really in the position to do so but fortunately had help from family. Many families are looking to leave Ohio right now because of the dangerous legislation and the influence it's had. We are one of the families who can't-so this move was our last chance to try and help our kids.

This is such a condensed story, but I know there's only so much time and lots of other testimonies to read. Please, please consider the reality of how dangerous and destructive this legislation is. I urge you not to pass House Bill 68.