

**Opponent Testimony for House Bill 68
Senate Government Oversight Committee
December 6th, 2023**

**Ross Widenor, City Council Vice President
City of Munroe Falls**

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Government Oversight Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on this harmful bill. My name is Ross Widenor, and I am the Council Vice President and Ward 1 Council Member for the City of Munroe Falls. The testimony herein is submitted on behalf of me and the undersigned community leaders.

As an elected official, I have a duty to act in the best interest of my constituents. This bill takes away a parent's right to obtain medical care needed by their transgender child. The statehouse should refrain from interfering in the decisions among parent, child, and doctor regarding the best course of treatment for a minor who is transgender or in a questioning phase regarding their gender identity. In the latter case, puberty blockers are a long-standing, safe, effective way to delay development while a longer-term course of treatment can be decided. Their use is supported by the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, and a slew of other medical associations, and there is no reasonable justification to ban them.

I am a member of the LGBTQ+ community myself and have numerous transgender friends and colleagues. All of them are quick to stress the importance of gender-affirming care in their pursuit of happiness, and even to their life itself. The proposed legislation, banning this care to vulnerable children who need it, is actively harmful to transgender youth and their families.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill. In closing, I want to stress that transgender children matter. Gender dysphoria is a real condition, gender-affirming care is the treatment, and legislators need to stop trying to tie the hands of doctors who want to do what is best for their patients.

Sincerely,



Ross Widenor

Co-signed:

Dina Edwards, Munroe Falls City Council At-Large Elect

Kyle Herman, Stow City Council At-Large Elect

Carla Brown, Stow-Munroe Falls Democratic Club President; Democratic Central Committee

Karen Fritschel, Former Mayor of Stow

David A. Licate, Ph.D., Stow City Council At-Large

Fran Wilson, Akron Community Organizer

Kari Suhadolnik, Stow-Munroe Falls Board of Education

Barbara Kaplan, Crooked River Action Lead Organizer

Cyle Feldman, Stow City Council At-Large

John Impellizzeri, Munroe Falls City Council At-Large

Al Prince, Munroe Falls City Council, Ward 3

Sandra Kurt, Summit County Clerk of Courts

Nathan Jarosz, Summit County Progressive Democrats President

Steven Hooten, Summit County Young Democrats President

Aaron Uhl, University of Akron College Democrats President

Nancy Binzel, Stow-Munroe Falls Board of Education President

Russ Balthis, Cuyahoga Falls City Council At-Large