

Find Your Way Counseling & Consulting LLC

10945 Reed Hartman Hwy, Suite 313

Blue Ash, OH 45242

Date: 12/4/23

Dear: Chairwoman Roegner, Vice Chairman Antani, and Members of the Senate Government Oversight Committee:

My name is Sarah World and I am a full-time private practice therapist and partner at Find Your Way Counseling & Consulting LLC. I have a Masters degree in Social Work from the University of Kentucky and am independently licensed with supervisory designation in the state of Ohio. I have a Master degree in Community and Public Health Education from the University of Cincinnati. I am also an Ohio resident. I began my private practice in 2019 and work largely with the LGBTQ population of all ages. I was employed full time at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC) as a social worker in the transgender clinic at CCHMC from 2013-2019 where I assessed and evaluated ~1500 patients and their families who presented with gender identity concerns.

I am writing in **OPPOSITION** to the HB68 and the Anti-Trans bills. Banning access to affirming and necessary mental health and medical care for transgender minors not only goes against medical advice, it also significantly and negatively impacts psychological outcomes for this population. In my experience, parents/caregivers do the best they can, often in difficult circumstances, to make decisions they believe are in their child's best interest. These parents and their child, along with their mental health provider and doctor should be able to make decisions about their healthcare.

Licensed and trained professionals, such as physicians, licensed therapists, clinical counselors and psychologists, etc., are equipped to follow standards of care guidelines, offer guidance and support for the LGBTQ population and make qualified and ethical decisions for readiness for affirming care for minors. Guidelines from the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH), the National Endocrine Society and the American Psychological Association, to name a few, exist to provide a blueprint for providing affirming care to transgender minors. **The Ohio lawmakers should leave the practice of medicine to licensed healthcare providers. I cannot imagine another diagnosis where a state law would prohibit us from delivering evidence-based care.** My profession has ethical guidelines in place by the Ohio licensing board, Counseling, Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapist Board, as well as the NASW, National Association for Social Workers. These entities perform thorough investigation into evidence-based research to guide our practice and well equipped to put forth guidelines for mental health professionals to practice by, including care for transgender youth.

I address patients' mental health every day. Trans youth who are persistent, consistent and insistent about their gender identity have positive psychosocial outcomes when they are able to live authentically in their mind and body, which is what affirming care helps them to do. My client population have high rates of depression and anxiety which are further exacerbated when not treated by affirming care and

acceptance. I was trained to treat the whole child; ignoring a child's mental health or a diagnosis like gender dysphoria is simply not responsible care. These bills are an OVEREACH and need to be opposed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah World', with a stylized, cursive script.

Sarah World MS, MSW, LISW-S

She/her/hers

Sarah@findyourwayllc.com

513-392-8034