

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Trans Allies Of Ohio

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House Bill 68, Ohio's ban on gender-affirming care for transgender youth and participation in sports in kindergarten through collegiate athletics for transgender students.

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) - Trans Allies Of Ohio, and the many Ohio families of transgender children we represent, are pleased Governor DeWine made the right decision by vetoing House Bill 68 today. This holiday season our families have been on edge, wondering if they will have to pack up and move out of state, leaving grandparents, jobs, churches, schools, and friends behind so their children can receive the medical care they need. They are exhausted. They have had to drag themselves to the Statehouse to fight a nonstop onslaught of discriminatory, inflammatory bills and state policy targeting Ohio's trans youth and the larger trans community since 2021 when HB 68's predecessor, HB 454, was introduced.

Governor DeWine's veto provides Ohio families of transgender children a small reprieve from this constant battle. Ohio's gerrymandered, Republican controlled legislature still has the ability to override this veto. And more bills are making their way through the Ohio legislature that will negatively impact the lives of transgender children, their families, and transgender adults.

"We appreciate that the Governor took the time to visit Ohio's pediatric hospitals, including Cincinnati Children's which was ranked #1 in the nation this year, and reach out to Ohio families of transgender children over the holiday break," Jeanne Ogden, co-founder of Trans Allies Of Ohio said. "His willingness to learn more offers hope that others will step away from the partisan, divisive rhetoric and consider the individuals impacted by these bills. Preserving the rights of Ohio parents, in consultation with Ohio doctors, to direct their own children's medical care should never have been a question."

These Ohio parents and their children are heroes. Accompanied by TransOhio, Trans Allies of Ohio, coalition partners like Equality Ohio, ACLU Ohio, and Honesty for Ohio Education, friends and community allies, they submitted over 500 pieces of testimony opposing HB 68 in both the House and Senate, outnumbering proponent testimony at least 7 to 1. Having to tell stories of trauma and fear over and over is draining. Having to "debate" whether affirming your trans child is dangerous, beg for your child's life-saving healthcare, or fight for the right of transgender friends, family, and community members to exist at any age is deeply harmful. Their testimony,

humanity, and pain was ignored by Ohio's gerrymandered Republican majority who passed this bill in a defiant act of blatant government overreach to the detriment of every Ohioan.

"We are grateful for media coverage of this issue, but we ask for patience and understanding. Ohio families of transgender children have made numerous media appearances in an attempt to educate the public and pleaded to be left alone to care for their own children. Our members of Trans Allies Of Ohio ask you to recognise that any quotes or statements come at a cost to these families and the need for them to keep speaking out shows how hostile Ohio's Republican Legislature is to their personal liberty." - **Sam Shim, Columbus Father and Trans Allies Of Ohio Member.**

We will continue our support of Ohio's transgender youth, their families, and Ohio healthcare professionals.

-Trans Allies Of Ohio
www.transalliesohio.org

Trans Allies Of Ohio is a grassroots coalition of Ohio allies, transgender youth, and their families volunteering together to achieve fair treatment and equal opportunity for the Ohio transgender community.

Primer on Ohio H.B. 68:

WHAT WOULD AN OVERRIDE OF HB 68 DO?

- Enact a blanket ban on every type of gender-affirming care for Ohio's transgender youth, with the exception of those Ohio residents who are already receiving gender-affirming medical care on the law's effective date. *Ohio laws are effective 90 days after they are signed.*
- Prohibit the ability of medical professionals to provide Ohioans the best, medically accepted, treatment. This treatment is necessary for a small percentage of children experiencing severe gender dysphoria by every major national and Ohio healthcare association and ALL 6 of Ohio's pediatric hospitals including Cincinnati Children's (ranked #1 in the nation), Nationwide Children's (ranked #6) and the Cleveland Clinic. Learn more: <https://transalliesohio.org/elementor-3393/>
- Deny consideration of certain parental rights in court

- Commit Ohio to a polarizing, lengthy, resource-consuming legal process to defend the State's theft of a parent's right to seek medical care for their child, a right a federal judge in Idaho recently found to be "deeply rooted in our nations history and traditions."
- Rob Ohio's transgender students in kindergarten through post-secondary education of the social, physical, and mental health benefits of joining their friends and classmates on sports teams.

WHAT IS GENDER-AFFIRMING MEDICAL CARE?

Every patient who walks through the door of a medical provider's office or hospital receives gender -affirming care. This simply means respect and medical treatment that is appropriate and necessary for a person's gender, from honoring a patient's preferred mode of address to supporting treatment options each patient needs.

In the context of H.B. 68, gender-affirming care is an umbrella term that includes a range of services that people receive to align their gender identity and body, including therapy, consultations with doctors, hormone therapy, medication, and surgery (which is reserved for those who are over 18).

Here's how H.B. 68 hurts Ohio:

H.B. 68 is bad for BUSINESS

1. 20% of the next generation's workforce identify as LGBTQ+. H.B. 68 makes it more difficult for employers to recruit the talent they need, thus making Ohio a less desirable place to do business(1).
2. Intel, a multinational technology company with extensive policies supporting trans employees and parents of trans kids, recently made a \$20 billion investment in Ohio, bringing 10,000 new jobs to the state.(2) This bill threatens members of their workforce and their ability to recruit employees.

H.B. 68 is bad for FAMILIES

1. Trans youth who receive gender-affirming care are 73% less likely to attempt suicide and 60% less likely to experience depression and report feelings of hopelessness about their future.(3)
2. H.B. 68 prohibits parents from accessing life-saving medical treatment for their children. Parents, transgender youth, and their doctors should decide the proper medical course of action, not lawmakers.
3. Passage of H.B. 68 will force Ohio families who believe this is the best medical care for their child to move out of the state, causing financial, housing, social, mental and physical health hardship.

And the public agrees!

1. 76% of likely voters believe that the decision regarding access to care for transgender youth should rest with parents or medical practitioners.(4)

(1) Doherty, Erin. (2022). *The number of LGBTQ-identifying adults is soaring*. Axios.

<https://www.axios.com/2022/02/17/lgbtq-generation-z-gallup>

(2) Intel Press Team. (2023). *Intel Invests in Ohio*. Intel.

<https://www.intel.com/content/www/us/en/newsroom/resources/intel-invests-ohio.html#gs.1bwxg5>

(3) Tordoff DM, Wanta JW, Collin A, Stepney C, Inwards-Breland DJ, Ahrens K. *Mental Health Outcomes in Transgender and Nonbinary Youths Receiving Gender-Affirming Care*. *JAMA Network Open*. 2022;5(2):e220978. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.0978

(4) *Data for Progress' LGBTQ+ Issues Working Group*. (2023). *Democrats Should Stand Strong Against Anti-Trans Attacks in 2024 and Codify Medical Care Protections the Next Chance Get*. Data For Progress.

<https://www.dataforprogress.org/insights/2023/11/17/democrats-should-stand-strong-against-anti-trans-attacks-in-2024-and-codify-medical-care-protections-the-next-chance-they-get>