

Dear Chair Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee,

My testimony is in opposition to House Bill 1474. I ask that you give this bill a Do Not Pass.

I am a suicide prevention advocate that specializes in LGBTQ+ populations and accurate collection of vital data is essential for me to be able to do my job. I gave testimony asking to Do Pass on HB 1390, because it would implement a suicide fatality review commission. This commission is essential for understanding broader community data around suicide with the intent to create more sophisticated awareness of the factors impacting suicide related death.

In this same capacity, we cannot understand community health without understanding how it impacts the individuals within it. I advocated for inclusion of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Data for both the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) and our Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS).

I have used YRBS data when applying for grants and determining community needs. I was awarded a grant through the Community Consensus Council, based on this data, through my work with the Community Uplift Program to do further research into school outcomes. This eventually became the LGBTQ+ School Climate Report of 2021 and serves as the only state data looking at LGBTQ+ youth needs.

The BRFS of 2022 will release its data sometime this year. It will be the first time it included SOGI data in a decade. We will be using this data to understand and respond to community needs related to health and suicidality.

The definitions of sex that are being added into this piece of legislation are not consistent with state or national data metrics. How we ask questions and what words mean from a data analysis perspective are extremely important and recommendations in this bill are not in line with best practices and would serve to jeopardize the validity of the data we collect.

I strongly urge a Do Not Pass. Especially because as our state considers over a dozen bills that impact LGBTQ+ youth, accurate vital data is the best means to understand the impact these bills will have on community health.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state

Best regards,
Faye Seidler