

My name is Jake Ferruzzi. I am a resident of District 20. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB426, the Transgender Respect, Agency, and Dignity Act. This legislation would protect transgender, nonbinary, and intersex inmates who face a staggering amount of discrimination and violence while incarcerated.

This bill would allow LGBTQ+ individuals to request transfer to gender appropriate facilities and would prohibit discrimination from correctional facility employees on the basis of protected classes, including sexual orientation and gender identity.

LGBTQ+ individuals are especially vulnerable in correctional facilities. 40% of transgender women have reported being sexually assaulted in prison. 50% of trans people have been sexually assaulted in prison. LGB people are 10 times more likely to be sexually victimized by another incarcerated person, and 2.6 times more likely to be sexually victimized by staff.

Due to the violence they experience, LGBTQ+ incarcerated individuals are 85% more likely to be placed in solitary confinement, and 50% have been placed there against their will.

Incarcerated individuals are often forgotten by society, and their rights are never treated as a priority. No one deserves to experience sexual violence or discrimination. Voting against this bill only allows this injustice and the dehumanization of LGBTQ+ incarcerated individuals to continue.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB426.