I am writing to express my vehement condemnation of the Iowa LGBTQ Erasure bill, specifically House Study Bill 649, introduced by Governor Kim Reynolds. As an author and youth worker advocating for LGBTQI youth, I am deeply concerned about the potential harm this legislation poses to the lives and well-being of LGBTQI Iowans.

The bill, commonly referred to as the LGBTQ Erasure Act, seeks to define "sex," "man," and "woman" in state law, relying on the sex assigned at birth. This not only contradicts the overwhelming consensus among medical professionals but also raises serious issues related to personal privacy and discrimination.

Major medical organizations, including the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Psychiatric Association, strongly support gender-affirming medical care for transgender adolescents. Research consistently indicates that such care leads to favorable mental health outcomes, including improvements in depression and overall functioning.

Governor Reynolds' proposal to define a person's sex based on their biological reproductive system overlooks the complexities of gender identity and fails to recognize the medical and psychological well-being of transgender individuals. The legislation, if passed, would negatively impact various aspects of daily life, from public health data collection to anti-discrimination protections.

Furthermore, the bill's provisions concerning driver's licenses and birth certificates are deeply problematic. Requiring disclosure of personal medical information, especially for transgender individuals undergoing sex-change operations, raises serious privacy concerns. The potential segregation of transgender Iowans in state-funded facilities is not only discriminatory but also runs counter to the principles of inclusivity and equality.

Similar legislation in other states has faced legal challenges, and Iowa's bill, with its questionable definitions of "equal" and "separate accommodations," may also raise constitutional concerns. The potential complications for children with same-sex parents, as highlighted by the bill's definitions of "mother" and "father," further underscore the problematic nature of this legislation.

I urge you to reconsider and reject House Study Bill 649. Instead, I encourage the Iowa Legislature to prioritize policies that promote inclusivity, respect individual rights, and align with the well-established recommendations of medical professionals in supporting gender-affirming care for transgender individuals.