

HSB242 would take Iowa back to a time when transgender persons lived in the shadows, scraped by because discrimination kept them from obtaining a good education, jobs and housing. A time when transgender persons frequently suffered from depression and many turned to alcoholism and drugs or committed suicide because society was so cruel and hateful.

Iowa has made great strides since 2007 when the Iowa Civil Rights Act was amended to protect all people regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. Transgender persons are more welcome in our schools, houses of worship, at work, and in our neighborhoods and communities. Until recently, they were able to more fully participate in our society, be ordained clergy, have families, take vacations, coach the tennis team, see themselves in our books and history, and simply pursue happiness, just like you and me.

Our families are learning about the transgender people in our midst and are welcoming them into our lives and hearts, as you would with any family member. We see more trans folks and students these days, and we have learned more about them as **human beings**.

Our family has joined the ranks of other families with transgender members. They are our family and we, my husband and I, would do all we can to protect their rights and dignity, which is why we write you today. Do not take away their rights! Let our grandchild have the opportunity to grow up healthy, get an education in her chosen field, seek and fulfill her dreams, fall in love, decide to become a parent if she wishes and live in peace, without the drumbeat of hate and bigotry - that will destroy her soul, her life - that is pouring from this Legislature, Governor and those who claim to be Christian.

I am a person of faith who believes that we are all children of God and deserving of her love. This includes recognizing that transgender persons are children of God, too, just like you and me, and deserving of his love, respect and fairness. Including gender identity in the civil rights law and protecting people who are transgender from discrimination is heeding God's commandment to love one another as she loves you.

Please do not advance the trans erasure bill, HSB 242, or any similar amendment, that would take rights away from transgender people.

Thank you for consideration of our email. This is a moral issue and we are counting on you to show Iowans the goodness in your heart and that respects the dignity of all persons, including transgender individuals by opposing HSB 242.