

Good morning. My name is Kayde Martin and today, I speak not just for myself but for many transgender youths in Iowa fighting for basic rights. I was born on February 27th, 2007. Today on my 18th birthday, I stand before you fighting for the same basic civil rights that every Iowan deserves by humanly asking you to vote against this bill. It deeply troubles me that after 18 years of living here with my family, attending school, and working this is the focus of our state? I am about to attend the University of Northern Iowa in the fall, and I hope to live independently without fearing discrimination simply because of who I am. If this bill passes, it will make it harder for me and many other Iowans to find housing, jobs, education, and financial support. This essentially puts many of us at risk of homelessness, unemployment, and exclusion. I've heard some talk about women's rights in recent days, and with that I ask you all: why do women's rights only seem to be defended when they are used to harm the transgender community? Where is that same outcry when it comes to women's choices in their own bodily anatomy? This contradiction is hypocrisy, and it's deeply disturbing to witness. I would also like to bring up that I was raised with Christian beliefs, and I believe that faith teaches us to love and respect all people, regardless of identity as a whole. A good Christian knows that only the Lord is one to judge and only the Lord knows what he is doing. Nobody knows our father's plan; I believe our experiences in life create who we are as people. It is the morals of the people that determine if we are accepted by our heavenly father. Is it not a sin to judge? As it is written in Romans 2 verse 1 "You therefore have no excuse, you who pass judgement onto someone else for whatever point you judge another; you are condemning yourself because you who pass judgement do the same things." It is Christians who nitpick the Bible that are not pure of heart. It is those who do not "love thy neighbor" that receive the judgement from the Lord as all sins are equal and can be forgiven. I ask you to vote against this bill, to stand for fairness and equality for everyone. I want to be able to be the person I was meant to be; to live my life fully as the person the God knows me to be. I am just a human who wants the same rights as everyone else. Please, don't take those rights away simply because you disagree with who I am. Being trans is not a choice, it's a reality that you come to when you learn to understand yourself and I hope for those who refuse to try to understand that we can just agree to disagree like civil people, instead of targeting each other from whatever background we may come from and avoid becoming more divided as a state. Thank you for your time today.