

From Jennifer Parson
Individual Testimony
OPPOSING SB 180
To the Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare
Hearing: February 15, 2023

To the Honorable Senator Beverly Gossage and esteemed members of the Public Health and Welfare Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony today. I vehemently oppose Senate Bill 180. I am a human services professional with degrees in Psychology and Women's Studies from the University of Kansas, and I have been a lifelong, staunch advocate for women's rights. I am also a lifelong Christian and a seminary graduate.

This law may be packaged in terms of "protecting women" but in actuality it is a tool for continued, blatant oppression of transgender and nonbinary individuals. Cisgender women (those assumed to be women at birth who continue to identify as women) *do not need protection from trans people*.

Several aspects of this legislation are patently untrue. First, the assertion that biological sex is a binary (i.e. male or female) state at birth is simply untrue. Approximately 1 in 2000 individuals is born intersex—having genitalia that is ambiguous or has both male and female traits. Likewise, any assertion that biological sex can be reduced to XX or XY chromosomes ignores the wide diversity of genetic makeup that contributes to physical sex characteristics. There is, indeed, glorious biodiversity within the human species.

Second, while it is true that women often experience discrimination in education, athletics, and employment, that discrimination is not happening because of transgender or nonbinary individuals. In fact, trans and nonbinary people experience *even more* discrimination in education, athletics, and employment, often at the bidding of this very legislature and the proponents of this bill.

The legislation states that biological differences make women more physically vulnerable to violence, including sexual violence. Cisgender women are *not* more at risk because of their sex-linked physical traits. Rather, they are more at risk due to generations of socialization that treats women as sexual objects and fails to hold men consistently accountable for the violence they inflict. What's more, in no way is the risk of sexual violence increased by transgender individuals. Rather, transgender people are at far greater risk of being victims of

violence. Transgender people age 16+ are victimized over four times more often than cisgender people. (Source: <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/press/ncvs-trans-press-release/>)

This legislation claims to want to preserve single-sex spaces in the name of ensuring safety. Before KU, I began my college career at Cottey College, historically a women's college, where trans and nonbinary people are and have been welcomed. I have shared bathrooms, locker rooms, student housing, and other such spaces with trans and nonbinary people. Never at any time have I felt or been at risk because of their presence.

This bill is not only appalling and offensive, it is wholly unnecessary.

As a Christian, I am particularly ashamed that so many of my fellow Christians have chosen to weaponize the faith we share against LGBTQ people, particularly trans and nonbinary individuals. From the depth of my faith I will say:

- Trans bodies are sacred.
- Trans people are God's beloved.
- God's love is larger than Christians' hate.

This bill, like each other piece of anti-trans legislation coming before the legislature in this annual onslaught, is one more attempt to codify discrimination and hatred into law. Kansans deserve better than that. Kansans *are* better than that.

I implore you, please vote **NO** on this bill.

Thank you,



Jennifer Parson