



Testimony of Andrea Johnson in support of HB632

Pennsylvania House Judiciary Committee

Harrisburg

June 2, 2025

Good day, Representatives. My name is Andrea Johnson, and I come before you as a child of God, the product of awesome grandparents who raised me after my mother passed. I am a mother, a grandmother, an advocate, and an activist. I am a fierce, bold, and vibrant human living with HIV.

While focused on raising my kids and helping in my community, I spent most of my career in corporate America. I founded an organization called GIRL U CAN DO IT, INC., seeking to guide young women toward success.

After I learned of my then-husband's infidelity, my doctor tested me for sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. On July 10, 2007, I was told that I had HIV. I thought: "HIV?! How? I am too healthy, my husband is too healthy. He looks good and is in great shape." My idea of how HIV looked was distorted by the images of sickly-looking men on their deathbeds. How could this happen to me?!

I had so many *hows*: How was I going to tell my kids and my family, how was I going to survive, how was I going to keep my employers from finding out?



I felt like I was going to just die from the stress, the shame, and anxiety of all the stigma that faced me if someone found out. How was I ever going to find love again, living with something that could change another's life, as it had mine?

By the grace of God, my family, caring doctors, and knowledge about HIV, I am able to defy HIV stigma to help myself and others. I take my medications, control my HIV, and stay healthy. I work with Penn Medicine and Drexel Med to test thousands of youths and adults in emergency room settings and get them into HIV prevention and care.

Removing criminalization of HIV from the law, which House Bill 632 would accomplish, is an important step toward getting rid of the stigma, and to removing barriers to getting tested and into care for HIV.

By voting for HB632 and taking a stand to end stigma, you will be standing on the right side of history.

Thank you.



About Andrea Johnson, Testifier

Andrea Johnson is the Founder of GIRL U CAN DO IT, INC. (GUCDII), a non-profit organization specializing in human trafficking, homelessness, HIV/AIDS, and youth mentorship.

Since her youth, Andrea has always been an advocate against injustices against others. Little did she know those acquired skills would prove to be helpful in helping her to eventually save her own life. In July 2007, after suffering from abuse at the hands of her ex-husband and learning about his infidelities, Andrea was tested for HIV and learned that she had acquired HIV from her ex-husband. Not knowing where to turn or what to do, she initially felt isolated, depressed, alone, and hopeless. Her refusal to remain silent about her status, and her learning about the high rates of women acquiring HIV in the Black and Brown community, she began speaking in Washington, D.C. for youths, women and families living with and affected by HIV and AIDS. Her diagnosis opened opportunities with Penn Medicine and Drexel's College of Medicine that enabled her to successfully test and counsel thousands of people that came through their emergency rooms, clinical and community settings for HIV.

Andrea is associated with numerous national and international organizations helping to save lives from domestic violence, human sex trafficking, homelessness and HIV. She works full-time in corporate America and is a woman living with HIV and defining the quote "YOU ONLY STOP YOU."