

## Testimony to State House - Stop CRT

Good afternoon,

I am Dan Salcido, a resident of Anderson Township , Cincinnati. We moved here from California over 30 years ago with P&G. Our school district is Forest Hills and despite having spent over \$250,000 in taxes for this district since moving here, we chose to educate our 7 kids through private Catholic schools where we felt the beliefs, values and morals are more aligned with what we live in our home.

My background is important to better frame my stance on CRT as I am a 1<sup>st</sup> generation American of Mexican descent. That should not matter at all, yet, given my testimony today, it is of critical importance to segregate my race and religion as it apparently matters to a growing number of school districts and their misguided indoctrination of Critical Race Theory – CRT.

For example, my own Forest Hills School District. Per the Forest Hills School Board meeting of May 24, they explained that they initiated a Team to develop a solution in the improvement of the safety and wellness for the students given a handful of suicides in 2017-18. The Team provided a platform entitled C.A.R.E. for Compassion, Advocacy, Relationships and Engagement/Empowerment which, on the surface, everyone could agree. However, beyond the benign sounding and clever CARE acronym is the chameleon CRT doctrine. The superintendent has disingenuously declared that CARE is not CRT, that he would never have CRT in FHSD and that CARE is a “Team” and not a “program”. Once again misguided as while you will not find the actual words or acronym of Critical Race Theory, the language and the resulting training conducted contains the nefarious tenets of CRT. The CARE Team, with approval by the Superintendent and Board, hired a

consultant from the Hamilton County ESC to conduct professional development training in April 2021. In the pre-work and session, the following was included:

- The “confession” technique where staff members worked to understand their individual “implicit bias, microaggression, and privilege” and gender bias such as “toxic masculinity” – all these are all CRT terms & teachings.
- Based on a person’s identity (race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) you either automatically possessed “privilege” or “disadvantage.”
- Focus on “One Degree Shift” that targets race, class, culture and poverty to frame CRT concepts of privilege, implicit bias, and microaggressions.

This is why I am here today. House Bill 327 will legislate a necessary remedy to a growing, misguided and repressive educational curriculum that is finding its way into our state’s schools. This CRT-influenced curriculum does not challenge our students to think critically, but rather discriminatorily. CRT attempts to imbue them with the notions that they are either the oppressed or the oppressor and have a predisposition, consciously or unconsciously, to be a racist and sexist. – simply by the color of their God-given skin or gender. Like the FHSD CARE example, often it is entering our schools like a sheep in wolf’s clothing and our Superintendent’s and their School Boards naively or ignorantly open the door. This is how dangerous, cancerous infections spread; we need to fix this misguided, politicized and dreadfully harmful movement NOW. It’s up to you!

Nelson Mandela is attributed with having said, “Our world is not divided by race, color, gender or religion. Our world is divided into wise people and fools. And fools divide themselves by race, color, gender, or religion.”

My father immigrated to California from Mexico as a late teen in the 1950's and endured oppressive discrimination. However, he, and I, came through the 1960's and the civil rights movement led by MLK and other champions to deliver positive societal transformation and a more level playing field for all Americans who need a hand up, not a hand-out. My father bought in to the American dream and, while his dream included his nightmare of the turmoil of discrimination and racial divide with segregation and hate groups such as the Black Panthers, the KKK, etc., he never, ever gave up. Rather he doubled down. My father taught me several foundational points which have guided me all my life and in which I can best frame my testimony on asking, nay respectfully demanding, that House Bill 327 be heard, approved and signed into immediate legislation.

When I was an impressionable young man, my father emphasized, as MLK, that character, not the color of my Mexican skin, is how a man will be judged. He taught me that integrity and the resolve to do "the right thing" is the deciding factor which will gain the respect and trust of other people no matter the color of their skin. Character, he explained, is something you must earn and is equally and equitably available to everyone in America no matter their station or color or religion. Indeed, to this day, any position I have held or situation I have been in I can rely on the continued development and guidance of my character to do the right thing.

However, the clear and present danger is that Critical Race Theory discounts Character to Race. CRT indoctrination emphasizes a resurgence of the racial divide that decades, and champions such as MLK and Nelson Mandela, have attempted to bridge. Indeed, key tenants of CRT from a "Race" perspective include:

- *The assignment of fault, blame, or bias to individuals because of their race, color, nationality, or sex.*
- *The claim that, consciously or unconsciously, and by virtue of his or her race, color, nationality, or sex, members of any race are inherently racist or are inherently inclined to oppress others, or that members of a sex are inherently sexist or inclined to oppress others;*
- *The promoting of teaching concepts that one race or sex is inherently superior to another race or sex;*

Zero is attributable to a person's character, zero. It draws lines, divisions and regurgitates (the vomit of) racial strife while harmfully placing a burden on a race of people who literally "were born that way!" Not a person in this room today had ANY influence in their race, ethnicity or sex – the invisible guiding hand of God determined that; yet, CRT would have our children believe that if they are white, they are privileged, biased, racist, oppressors – thereby assassinating Character. Rather than teaching our children to destruct through racial divide, let's promote the construction of their character and doing the right thing to, and with, everyone.

A second foundational life lesson taught to me by my father was to work hard and earn your own way. My father barely graduated high school, worked 3 jobs to help my brother and I attend our local Jesuit College Preparatory as he understood the value of education in paving a future for us that could be better than his. My brother and I were fully invested in that effort by working after school jobs and still maintaining academic excellence to earn scholarships. As a result, due to my hard work along with strong encouragement from my Jesuit teachers, I applied and was accepted to Harvard on scholarship. I mention this not as a shameless brag but because of what happened next. I declined Harvard as frankly I was scared, as the

first in my generation to go to college let alone one of the most prestigious universities in America that was also on the opposite coast from me in California. But, it anchored me to the fact that, as my father told me, there is equal and equitable opportunity for anyone to strive and merit what they earn, not to lower the bar so that hard workers such as myself are handicapped. CRT distorts through an indoctrination which at best replaces, and at worst vilifies equality. Recall equal means “the same” while equitable means “fair”. While they are not directly interchangeable it is important to draw the distinction that treating these notions as an either / or and not an and, reduces the potential abundance of opportunity one can earn. An example is that I was the poster child of a person who believed I had every equal opportunity to seek an acceptance to Harvard while, through my merit was treated equitably by the Jesuits in my earning scholarship through my hard work proving that shifting resources to me could improve my equal opportunity to achievement. It was not an either / or but an **AND** . It was not reduced to treating me on the basis of race, as CRT stresses, but rather on my academic prowess achieved by diligence, hard work and seizing both an equal and equitable opportunity. And, while I am a minority, I can categorically state that this same equal and equitable hand up would be given to deserving underprivileged students of any color, sex or religion – even white.

CRT once again grossly distorts the premise of equal and equitable opportunity by teaching an either / or, not an AND. CRT would indoctrinate the following tenants in our schools:

- Teaching that one nationality/race/ethnicity/race/sex is inherently superior
- Promulgating that the USA is fundamentally racist or sexist

- Labeling one as inherently racist, sexist, oppressive by virtue of skin color

This becomes the practice by CRT advocates of labeling students by color of their skin, admonishing them as having “white privilege”, that they are consciously or unconsciously racist and / or sexist and that they are oppressors and owe other races equity over equality which can further erode educational meritocracy.

My father also taught me the golden rule: to do unto others as I would have them do unto me. That respect, dignity and trust are earned through our actions not our words. And, that if, and when, I make a mistake, to own it and rectify it quickly and fully. US history has recorded many injustices and transgressions suffered by various races, religions, sexes, ethnicities. These can be unabashedly shameful, disgusting, reprehensible, and have put indelible stains and unhealing scars in our American history. As the same has occurred in every nation on this earth. My dad does not hold a grudge or feels he is “owed” from the 1950’s pinheads who attacked him in high school or from the transgressions of America commandeering Mexican land of California in the name of manifest destiny. That was then, this is now. History cannot, and should not, be re-written in a politicized fashion. CRT would have schools teach our children to:

- Blame, by virtue of skin color, for past transgressions of same color
- Stereotype and/or scapegoat Any form of race or sex
- Require students to advocate in order to gain course credit such as embracing the 1619 reframing of the founding of America

Again, at best this is delusional and obfuscates a flimsy premise from a few journalists in mid-2019, and at worst sinisterly contorts generational understanding of history for expediency and malice.

Extending this politicized logic train leads to highly controversial, inequitable and unequal proposals such as financial reparations to one race over another completely out of sync with the historical context where any transgression occurred to their past generation and which has been sealed by time and scars replacing the open wounds. These historical incidents will never be forgotten but neither should they be re-written and harmfully place blame on a particular race. Our children should not be educated in a manner that is racially divisive, or that teaches them to judge differences in skin color instead of content of character. I am opposed to any local, state or federal requirement that would force a local school district to incorporate critical race theory into their instruction.

Clearly, I am not saying that today is perfect; we still need to progress forward, not digress since no matter what you do, no matter what you say, no matter what you think, because you have less melanin in your skin you are a racist and you can't do anything to change it. This CRT approach will lead to our loss of America as we know it. CRT is exactly what its name says: a THEORY which means someone will tell you how to think, what to think and when to think it as a radical indoctrination to be suffered by this generation of children with devastating societal effects for their grandchildren to come.

America has embarrassingly slid to #6 in the Global <sup>1</sup>most educated ranking. With Ohio education <sup>2</sup>ranked #31 within the USA! The stakes have never been higher! We must NOT allow subversive, divisive and highly politicized "theories" to become generational damaging practices and erode the primary mission of our schools which is to provide academic instruction in a learning and social

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<sup>1</sup> OECD Org for Economic Cooperation & Development 2021

<sup>2</sup> US News & World Report 2021

environment demonstrating safety & wellness. House bill 327 provides equal and non-discriminatory education opportunities to students, while preventing further division among Americans. It specifically encourages the objective instruction and impartial discussion about divisive concepts while prohibiting the promotion, indoctrination, or forced acceptance of the concepts contained therein.

Very importantly, this bill does NOT prevent schools or government entities from teaching about racism, slavery, and segregation. What it does prohibit is schools from indoctrinating students by claiming one race is superior to another, or that individuals should be treated differently on the basis of race, ethnicity and/or gender. HB 327 encourages the objective instruction about and discussion of divisive concepts, rather than allowing taxpayer dollars to be spent on concepts that divide, rather than unite, students and our communities.

The time is now to progress House Bill 327 to legislation and return Ohio, and our nation, to educational prominence. We simply cannot afford not to.

Thank you, Questions?