

Testimony

Provided to the Ohio House, Higher Education Committee
Representative Tom Young, Chair
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OPPOSING
HB151

PROVIDED BY
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Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony against House Bill 151. I am a citizen of Oxford, Ohio and a professor at Miami University, where I have taught for 13 years. I do not represent Miami University, but rather I am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to HB151. I write to you with deep concern about HB151. At its core, the bill is deeply flawed and represents vast government overreach that undermines academic freedom and institutional autonomy. This bill is an appalling attempt to limit freedom of thought, without any evidence that the kind of activities, such as “faculty inculcation of students,” that the bill purports to protect against are actually occurring. It is one of the worst assaults on academic freedom and intellectual creativity that this nation has ever seen.

In addition to limiting the American rights to freedom of thought and free speech, HB151 will completely destroying the higher education system in Ohio. Our best faculty members who do not wish to teach under such a regime of surveillance and micromanagement will find jobs at other universities in other states. The bill bogs down the entire process of higher education in paperwork and oversight. Further, various unfunded mandates in the HB151 will require resources, but add not value to higher education. But the HB151’s impact will go far beyond higher education. It will hurt the workforce of Ohio, who used to depend on a quality education but can no longer find that in our state. Businesses will certainly also look elsewhere to invest in states where the legislature believes in American values.

Partisan-motivated control over higher education is dangerous in a free society. HB151 is an extremely partisan way to put together curriculum standards for higher education.

HB151 is a great disappointment, and I will never vote for a representative of who supported this bill. Anyone who does ought to be ashamed of themselves. I encourage all members of the Ohio Republican party to put their political allegiances aside and do what is right for the educators and students of Ohio.