

Testimony of Amber D. Franklin, Ph.D. CCC-SLP  
Before the House Higher Education Committee  
Rep. Tom Young, Chair  
May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Chair Young, Ranking Member Miller, and Members of the Higher Education Committee:

My name is Amber D. Franklin and I am a professor of Speech Pathology and Audiology at Miami University where I have taught for 12 years. I do not represent Miami University but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Substitute House Bill 151.

I am strongly opposed to House Bill 151 because of the harmful effects it will have on the viability and reputation of health science programs throughout our state.

Speech Pathology and Audiology graduate programs receive accreditation through the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA). CAA creates standards that academic programs must meet in order to gain and maintain accreditation. In 2023, CAA instituted a revised accreditation standard (standard 3.4A/B) titled "Diversity Reflected in The Curriculum." Here is an example of some of the standards:

*“The program must provide evidence that diversity, equity, and inclusion are incorporated throughout the academic and clinical program, in theory and practice.”*

*“The program must provide evidence that students are given opportunities to identify and acknowledge the impact of both implicit and explicit bias on clinical service delivery and actively explore individual biases and how they relate to clinical services.”*

There are 14 Communication Sciences and Disorders programs in Ohio. If these programs cannot comply with accreditation standards—because of this disastrous bill—their accreditation will be at risk. Miami University has recently invested millions of dollars in a new Health Sciences Building, which will be occupied by Speech Pathology and Audiology, Nursing, and a Physician Assistant program.

Why would the state of Ohio invest in health science programs that lead to stable and secure jobs, only to pass legislation that would jeopardize their accreditation status and diminish their national reputation?

Passage of House Bill 151 will make Ohio’s universities less attractive to talented and creative faculty, staff, and students who can afford to go elsewhere for their careers and their education. Ultimately, this will negatively impact Ohio’s economy, especially in university towns—like Oxford, Ohio.

I ask you to consider my written testimony and **vote NO** on this destructive bill that will undermine the investment Ohio has made in its health science programs, and in the state’s future healthcare workers.

Sincerely,  
Amber D. Franklin, Ph.D., CCC-SLP