

**Testimony of Mimi Plevin-Foust
Regarding HB151
Higher Education Enhancement Act
House Higher Education Committee**

Chairman Young, Vice Chair Dobos, Ranking Member Miller, and members of the Higher Education Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to present interested party testimony today.

My name is Mimi Plevin-Foust. My daughter is currently a student at Cuyahoga Community College; my husband has taught at Lakeland Community College for 20 years, and my Airbnb business often serves families of students at Case Western Reserve University and other nearby colleges. Everyone in my family will be affected by House Bill 151.

When my daughter and I went looking at colleges when she was a high school senior, I was amazed by the number of excellent private and public colleges and universities in Ohio within a couple of hours' drive from our home. These schools generate billions of dollars for our state – whether from out-of-state tuitions, research dollars, state sports teams, alumni contributions, and the thousands of businesses that provide services to the schools, their staffs, students and families, of which my Airbnb business is just one small example.

Ohio colleges and universities are also all competing for an ever-smaller pool of students to attend them, especially since the pandemic, a problem my husband has seen as Lakeland Community College's enrollment has dropped over the past few years.

I am deeply concerned that the multi-pronged, deeply unpopular, and unwanted changes that HB 151 would impose on Ohio schools and teachers will undermine their ability to attract new students and attract and retain professors, administrators, lecturers and staff. In fact, I wonder if this bill was secretly drafted by the higher education associations of Pennsylvania, Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois because their colleges are the ones that will benefit if HB 151 is passed and we see Ohio students, top professors, and research grants stream out of Ohio to teach and learn in our neighboring states where academic freedom is still respected.

As you probably are aware, most colleges now depend on minimally paid lecturers to teach many courses. My husband is one of those teachers. He keeps doing this work because he really enjoys teaching. However, there is no way most of these already underpaid lecturers will want to continue working in Ohio under the heavy additional demands and penalties imposed by HB 151's invasive rules.

HB 151's effect on the thousands of businesses (like mine) and the countless small towns that serve and depend on Ohio's colleges and universities will be catastrophic because we'll have fewer and fewer people to serve. It is likely that many Ohio colleges will eventually have to close as students with means choose to study elsewhere.

Please don't sabotage Ohio's higher education industry with this misguided bill which aims to undo decades of hard-fought social progress in our country and will harm countless families like mine. Vote 'No' on HB 151/SB 83 and do not allow its policies to be injected into any other bills.