

Chairman Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate

Workforce and Higher Education Committee,

My name is Joseph P. Heremans. I am a member of the National Academy of Engineering, the co-founder of an Ohio startup technology company, GonioTech LLC located in the state of Ohio incubator Rev1 on Kinnear Road in Columbus, and a Professor in the Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Department of the Ohio State University.

I am strongly opposed to Senate Bill 83 and its companion bill in the Ohio House, because it will hinder our ability to hire STEM-educated professionals for our startup company, and faculty in the STEM fields at OSU. Particularly hurtful is the provision in the bill that labels climate change as a “Controversial belief or policy”. Man-made climate change is scientifically established, even if politically inconvenient although high-tech renewable energy technologies are more lucrative for the state and its citizens and have much better long-term growth prospects.

The existing climatological data prove the existence and threat of climate change as uncontroversially as any other of the laws of physics. Labeling scientifically proven facts as “controversial belief” subject to debate is tantamount to the Ohio legislature trying to legislate new laws of physics. The state legislation has indeed the power do so, but only at the expense of ridicule amongst scientist and engineers.

STEM educated candidates for a position as engineer in our startup GonioTech or as STEM faculty at Ohio State University all understand that climate change mitigation technologies are necessary for the well-being of humanity and are a source of revenue for any society that embraces them. Hiring qualified scientists and engineers is critical to the economy of the state and will be strongly negatively affected by a law that labels reality a “controversial belief”. We have great difficulty hiring qualified engineers at GonioTech, and just mentioning SB83 to an out-of-state candidate is a deterrant to moving here.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this bill that will negatively impact the state of Ohio technologically and economically.

Joseph P. Heremans