

October 9, 2023

By Email attachment to:

[OHRHigherEducationCommittee@ohiohouse.gov](mailto:OHRHigherEducationCommittee@ohiohouse.gov)

The Honorable Tom You, Higher Education Committee Chair [Rep37@ohiohouse.gov](mailto:Rep37@ohiohouse.gov)

The Honorable Joe Miller, Ranking Member [Rep53@ohiohouse.gov](mailto:Rep53@ohiohouse.gov)

The Honorable Gayle Manning: [Rep52@ohiohouse.gov](mailto:Rep52@ohiohouse.gov)

To the Committee and Honorable Members,

I write to you today in opposition to House Bill 183 in my individual capacity and from my perspective as the Vice President and immediate past President of the Board of Education for the Bexley City School District. I have had a more than 30-year career as an attorney and serve as the Bexley School Board's legislative liaison. In that capacity, I monitor proposed legislation that has an impact on education in Ohio.

This year, the Bexley City Schools finalized its Strategic Plan for the coming years. As part of that plan, the district, with significant community input, identified its values as follows: Equity; Inclusion; Respect; Empathy; Well-being; Integrity; and Responsibility. These values reflect our support for every single student and staff member, not least of which are the most vulnerable among them. In my opinion, House Bill 183 runs counter to every one of these articulated values – values that I believe a vast majority of Ohioans share.

Moreover, because of its definitions as well as its overall purpose, I am concerned that House Bill 183 seeks to have Ohio school districts act counter to Federal Title IX protections for transgender students. The Supreme Court's decision in *Bostock v. Clayton County* affirmed that discrimination on the basis of someone's gender identity or sexual orientation is inherently discrimination on the basis of sex. In my opinion, passage of HB 183 could put our schools in an untenable position, seeking to have us act in transgression of not only our values but also established law.

I urge you not to support House Bill 183. Thank you for your consideration in support of public education in Ohio.

Respectfully,

*/s/ Victoria E. Powers*

Copies to:

Rep. Dontavius L. Jarrells, ranking member, House Finance

Committee: [Rep1@ohiohouse.gov](mailto:Rep1@ohiohouse.gov)

Sen. Hearcel F. Craig, ranking member, Senate Finance

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