

Testimony of Mary E. Triece, Ph.D.
Before the House Higher Education Committee
Rep. Tom Young, Chair
November 11, 2023

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

My name is Mary Triece and I am a professor of Communication at The University of Akron where I have taught for 25 years. I do not represent The University of Akron, but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Substitute Senate Bill 83.

The current version of SB 83 violates academic freedom, which in turn hurts our students. Senate Bill 83 eliminates tenure protections and stipulates that faculty unions cannot bargain over retrenchment, tenure, and evaluations. If you talked at length with university faculty and/or spent time looking into what our jobs entail, you would understand that we already undergo substantial review in terms of our research and teaching. Disallowing faculty to bargain over the terms of their work and rendering tenure meaningless puts faculty at risk of at-will firing, which in turn, negatively impacts how and what faculty teach.

I am also particularly concerned about the removal of “sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression” as persons included in the section that ensures equal opportunity for faculty, staff, and students. This is a clear violation of the Fourteenth Amendment.

I strongly encourage you to oppose Senate Bill 83.

Kind regards,

Mary E. Triece