

Testimony of Karla Anhalt, Ph.D.
Before the Ohio House of Representatives
Higher Education Committee
Tom Young, Chair
November 27, 2023

My name is Karla Anhalt, Ph.D. Though I work for Kent State University, I am not representing the institution. Instead, I am submitting this testimony as a private citizen of Ohio in opposition to Senate Bill 83 (S. B. No. 83). I am only submitting written testimony and won't provide oral testimony during the 11/29/23 meeting.

I am deeply and terribly concerned about S.B. No. 83 overall. This is a bill that was created as a solution to a problem that does not exist. Further, though the Ohio Legislature may think it acts as an island, passing S.B. No. 83 would have a terrible and detrimental impact to the higher education world in Ohio. It would impact student and faculty recruitment, as both bodies would have options to pursue higher education elsewhere, where state governments are more supportive of universities, and where state governments value the importance of higher education. The only individuals that appear to support this bill are individuals within the legislature and national organizations with an agenda to dismantle universities as we know them. Both bodies have little knowledge of the workings of higher education institutions. *Of note, proponent testimony from Ohio citizens and legislators' constituents is minimal. Ohio legislators should be focusing on ACTUAL problems of the citizens of Ohio instead of investing resources and time on nonexistent problems to advance their personal political agenda.*

Some specific concerns include:

S.B.No. 83 is an existential threat to the collective bargaining rights of faculty, as it would prohibit faculty from bargaining important terms and conditions of employment, including tenure, annual performance reviews, and retrenchment. THIS BILL IS ANTI-UNION. OHIO SHOULD NOT STAND FOR THIS.

S.B.No. 83 threatens academic freedom. The requirement that detailed course syllabi be made publicly available would encourage harassment of faculty teaching unpopular content. This would be an added bureaucratic burden on universities to implement, when financial resources to Ohio public universities have been reduced by a state government that does not fully support its institutions of higher education that bring so much good to the state.

The 'one-size-fits all' approach to the tenets and requirements of S.B.No. 83 fails to acknowledge the diverse range of missions and academic cultures of Ohio's institutions of higher education. Again, this demonstrates a lack of understanding of Ohio's institutions of higher education by Ohio's legislature.