

**Opponent Testimony for Senate Bill 83**  
**Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee**

November 27, 2023

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony against Senate Bill 83. My name is Sandy Wong, and I am an Assistant Professor of Geography at The Ohio State University. I do not represent OSU; I am submitting testimony as a private citizen to strongly oppose SB 83.

SB 83 is a dangerous, big-government bill that will cost Ohio's ability to attract and retain first-rate students and faculty, and it will hurt Ohio's economy. Prior to joining OSU this fall, I was an Assistant Professor at Florida State University, where I experienced firsthand the damage of Florida's regulations on higher education. When I received the job offer from OSU, I was eager to leave FSU. There, faculty are concerned about the erosion of academic freedom and morale is low. Many faculty are actively seeking employment elsewhere and units are having difficulty retaining faculty. Units are also struggling to hire exceptional faculty for vacant positions. The unstable and hostile academic environment makes it challenging to recruit excellent students. The brain drain means that the local economy loses skilled workers and tax revenue, and students lose access to innovative researchers and educators who can prepare them to be competitive in the job market. I strongly urge you to avoid steering Ohio in the same destructive path that Florida is heading.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this harmful bill. SB 83 will stifle free speech and honest conversations. It will hurt Ohio's ability to recruit the best students and faculty, and it will encourage students and faculty to go elsewhere. SB 83 is bad for students, higher education, and Ohio. Let us focus our energy instead on making sure that Ohio continues to thrive and to have a world-class higher education system that trains the next generation of leaders.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,

Sandy Wong