

November 28th, 2023

Testimony of Andrew Bernier, Ph.D., Before the House Higher Education Committee,

Rep. Tom Young, Chair

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

Thank you for allowing me to submit a written testimony today. My name is Andrew Bernier, Ph.D. I am an Assistant Professor of STEM Education at the University of Cincinnati's School of Education, where I have served for 3 years, teaching our teachers. I still feel new to Ohio and have been excited about joining the ranks of Ohio's esteemed Higher Education system.

However, Senate Bill 8 - 113 is deeply troubling and alarming to the integrity and reputation of higher education in Ohio, therefore I am strongly opposed to Senate Bill 83, even after the amendments made. The measures outlined in the bill against diversity, equity, and inclusion will deeply suppress the ability for those student populations who have often struggled in higher education to see themselves as part of this community. This is not a matter of being woke, it is an effort to help those who have been systemically oppressed for generation find footing in higher education.

Also, forcing faculty to post syllabi and course notes is a fear tactic to suppress, and is poorly veiled as an accountability and transparency measure. This will coerce faculty to suppress and censor their courses in fear of being pursued by the state, which is a massive overreach of government to police intellectual thought, particularly if that thought is not enjoyed by a party who enjoys a super-majority via gerrymandering in the state chambers. Additionally, being provided state sanctioned syllabi to teach is biased and promotes a sensationalized and forced perception of citizenship and patriotism, not allowing individuals to practice free-thinking to form their own identity as an American.

Also, banning any type of academic partnership with China will only make matters worse by making Ohioans more ignorant on a massive world culture. Our issues lie with the Chinese Communist Party, not with the Chinese people or culture.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this poorly conceived and ill-advised bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Andrew Bernier, Ph.D.