

Opponent Testimony for Senate Bill 83
House Committee on Higher Education
November 29, 2023

Annika Kuretsky
Private Citizen

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify. My name is Annika Kuretsky, and I'm originally from Illinois. I am currently in my fourth and final year at Miami University, where I study Social Justice Studies, Sustainability, and Latin American Studies. I am here to testify not as a representative of Miami, but as a private citizen now working and living full-time in Ohio as a result of my attendance as an out-of-state student at an Ohio public school. I am strongly opposed to Senate Bill 83, and feel that it will only hurt the quality and reputation of public education in Ohio.

This was the same position that I held last spring, when I submitted opponent testimony for an earlier version of this same bill. I find it incredibly disheartening that this bill is still being considered, given the record amount of public opposition that I personally witnessed in the spring. I drove two hours from Oxford to be in the Statehouse, where I waited for over five hours to give oral testimony in addition to my written testimony. Ultimately, I had to leave before giving my testimony in the interest of a commitment I had the following morning. While it was disappointing that I was not able to orally give my testimony, I was impressed with the opposition's turnout.

I remember thinking something along the lines of *if our representatives are truly meant to represent us, this bill should not go any further. If there is any real meaning and significance to public testimony— if they actually care what we have to say— this will go no further.* While I am not surprised that we are here again— and while I understand that the bill has been edited, and that I am not addressing a Senate committee today— I am thoroughly disappointed. You are meant to represent us. Please follow through and actually represent us.

Before wrapping up my testimony, I'll summarize a few points I made in my previous testimony for this bill, as nothing of importance has changed. If Senate Bill 83 had been passed while I was in the middle of deciding where to pursue my education, I am nearly certain that I would not have chosen to move to Ohio. Regardless of its intent, the bill reads to me (and many others) as vague, partisan, and restrictive.

If passed, I would expect the rates of out-of-state students coming to Ohio public universities with their out-of-state tuition dollars to sharply decline. I would also expect in-state students to begin seeking an education elsewhere. While private school tuition and out-of-state tuition might be more expensive, droves of students will perform a mental cost-benefit analysis and decide that it isn't even worth paying less in-state if their degree would have such a reputation. This is a

concern for our state's reputation and economy. If Senate Bill 83 is passed, simply put, the value of a degree from an Ohio public university would not be worth more than the paper that it is printed upon.

I'm very proud to attend Miami, and I'm very proud of the quality and integrity of my public school education. I want to see that the high quality education that Ohio schools have to offer is protected, and because of this, I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this dangerously overreaching bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.