

Testimony of Amy Sullivan, Ph.D
Before the House Higher Education Committee
Rep. Tom Young, Chair
Nov 28, 2023

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

My name is Amy Sullivan, and I am a professor of Biology at Miami University. I do not represent Miami University, but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Substitute Senate Bill 83.

I am concerned about the implications of this legislation for my classroom. It is important that we be able to cover biological topics openly and factually, without fear of accusations of bias or promoting a particular view point impacting our employment. I cover topics including evolution and climate change. I require students to understand the science behind these topics. We discuss implications of these topics in our everyday lives, such as antibiotic resistant bacteria, pesticide resistant lice and bedbugs, increased natural disasters due to climate change and their costs, human issues surrounding climate change and other environmental disasters. We touch on current policy and potential solutions. We have rich discussions about all of these issues. We can do all of this because I don't have any fear that I am crossing some undefined line of what is considered "controversial" in the classroom. If SB 83 is enacted, it will impact my classroom because of the undefined nature of what is considered controversial, so my students will not benefit from discussions that teach them to think about environmental issues from a broad perspective. This legislation is meant to solve a problem that doesn't exist, and if it is enacted it will end up hurting honest academic discourse in Ohio to the detriment of our students and our higher education system.

Please stop this legislation from moving forward. It will not benefit the students of Ohio. It will negatively impact the breadth and quality of education they receive.

Thank you for your time.