

My name is Constance Rubin and I am a 50-year resident of North Canton, OH, in Stark County. My late husband and I raised two daughters who graduated from North Canton's public schools and went on to acquire multiple graduate degrees from state-supported universities. My mother was a public school teacher, and our family has always supported public education as a bedrock of our democracy.

I write this testimony to strongly oppose the establishment of the proposed Social Studies Standards Task Force and its initial preference for "American Birthright: The Civics Alliance's Model K-12 Social Studies Standards." First, I oppose the make up of the Task Force which would include only elected officials, none of whom are elected members of Ohio's State Board of Education. In addition, the proposed task force actually requires no educators at all. Frankly, State Legislators have enough to do, without adding assessment of social studies and civics education to your responsibilities.

Secondly, I oppose that the one-year-old "American Birthright" curriculum be the standard used. Having only been published last year and having been adopted by only one school in Colorado, it hardly has a track record to recommend it. Furthermore, the affiliated organizations who have signed on as its champions are a who's who of American conservatism, not a diverse group of scholars it would like to have you believe. Its spokesman, David Randall of the National Assn. of Scholars and the Civics Alliance, claimed the curriculum's goal to be "protecting school children from indoctrination." I fear Ohio is poised to actually assure children's indoctrination...with an untried curriculum that does not reflect the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, nor the diversity within our state and nation. Furthermore, I believe such a curriculum will have the undesired effect of encouraging our young people to leave the state.

I come to this concern from my own experience. Both of my daughters left Ohio because of its lack of diversity and its conservatism; they have established homes in two of the most liberal states in our country: Washington and New York. Both work in state government, in agencies focusing on important issues facing our nation, and our own state—the environment and public education. We all know Ohio's population is growing much more slowly than other states. HB 103, that would seek to downplay "action civics" (according to David Randall's testimony), would take us backwards, and is likely to accelerate the trend of outward migration by talented, young Ohioans like my daughters.

As legislators who owe your election to voters, I would think you would champion “action civics,” not seek to adopt a curriculum that would downplay relevant current events and discourage opportunities to participate in government by high school students. Heaven knows we need more civic engagement by all our citizens, higher voter turnout, and more participation in local, county, township, and state government. That is what **democracy** allows, and should encourage. That is what creates **liberty** in a country with diverse citizens. While we all revere our founding documents and appreciate our country’s founding fathers, modern-day Americans also appreciate that both were flawed. Even those founders allowed for amendments to the federal Constitution. But they certainly didn’t foresee (nor did they even want) a culture where women, blacks, Native Americans and other immigrants would vote.

In closing, I encourage you to leave curriculum adoption to trained educators and quit trying to insert your political bias into Ohio’s classrooms.