

May 15, 2023

Chair Bird, Vice-Chair Fowler, Ranking Member Robinson, and Members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to testify. My name is Matthew Hollstein, I have spent the last eight years as a university educator. Prior to that I spent nine years as a K12 social studies teacher. I am also the father to three children who all attend public schools in Ohio. I am an active member of my national, state, and local social studies organizations where I advocate on behalf of social studies education. My testimony is my own and as a private citizen.

Today, I am testifying as an opponent of House Bill 103. I realize the outcome of the bill is to create a taskforce. However, I am in deep disagreement with the goals of said taskforce and the implementation of the *American Birthright* curriculum. There are many reasons for my disagreement. I am opposed to allowing a small number of individuals to decide the curriculum for social studies students and teachers across the state without input from social studies educators and teacher educators. Also, I believe that this bill and its subsequent curriculum eliminates the ability for social studies teachers, at all levels, to engage in critical and reflective lessons, dialogues, and examinations of social studies topics with students to prepare them to be our future citizens, leaders, and electorate.

I am deeply troubled by the belief that eliminating voices and discouraging a vibrant discourse in social studies could in any way be seen as beneficial to students and our state. Furthermore, narrowing the scope of social studies education to only those issues which are believed to be in line with one perception of what is acceptable is in opposition to the spirit of social studies education and democratic ideals. As an educator, I value and support disagreement and support all points of view in my classes. As a teacher educator, I train our future teachers to make their classrooms spaces for all voices, perspectives, and beliefs. However, this bill and its subsequent curriculum will eliminate that for everyone. I do not support this bill or its intended goals as it usurps the interests of our students, our state, and our citizens. Thank you very much for allowing me to offer testimony.

Thank you for your time and consideration,


Matthew Hollstein