

To whom it may concern,

My name is Henry Tikkanen and I am an integrated social studies teacher at Bridge Gate Community School. I have the pleasure of teaching social studies to grades 7-12 and get to teach almost every social studies class that can be offered at a middle or high school level. This has given me a unique perspective on social studies classes, and why the way they are taught is so important to students in the state of Ohio. That is why I am submitting this testimony today in opposition to House Bill 103.

House Bill 103 would implement new social studies standards in the state of Ohio called the American Birthright standards. These standards are not effective standards for students learning in the state of Ohio. These standards must not be used in Ohio for a few reasons.

First, the American Birthright standards completely ignore the need for students to learn social studies skills in schools. Social studies skills are possibly the most important thing that students get out of any social studies class. These skills include things like analyzing sources, contextualizing sources throughout history, debate skills, problem-solving skills, and literacy skills. These are all things that students should be able to do after their formal education. Without these skills, it becomes harder for students to participate in our democracy and to understand current issues in our society. These skills help people make informed decisions, recognize misinformation, and improve reading skills in general. Without working on these skills in social studies classes, students will fall behind and will be underprepared for life outside of school.

Second, implementing these standards would be incredibly expensive for the people of Ohio. School districts around the state already have their own sets of curriculum that they use for social studies classes during the year. This curriculum is based on the current standards for social studies in the state of Ohio. If these standards are changed, school districts will be forced to purchase new curriculum to ensure that they are aligning with state standards. Curriculum

can cost tens of thousands of dollars to purchase. This will hurt both schools and taxpayers if schools are forced to purchase a new curriculum that aligns with the American Birthright standards instead of the standards that are used in Ohio today.

I implore you to not proceed with the adoption of House Bill 103. This bill is an expensive and harmful mistake that would greatly impact the citizens of Ohio both inside and outside of our schools. It should not be passed and would not be beneficial to the people of our state.

Sincerely,

-Henry Tikkanen

*Integrated Social Studies Teacher*

*Bridge Gate Community School*