

Testimony for HB 171
Submitted by: Derek Burtch
Organization: Erase the Space
Testifying as Proponent

Chair Bird, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee,

My name is Derek Burtch. I live in Columbus, and I am executive director of Erase the Space. I am an educator, and I am asking this committee to support HB 171 which updates the Social Studies model curriculum to better reflect the histories of all Ohioans by including the migration histories, societal contributions and experiences of a range of communities in Ohio and the United States who are not currently represented in our classrooms.

I believe that passing this bill is good for Ohio and Ohio students because I believe in the text of HB171; I am here because I believe in the potential that HB171 has to help Ohio provide for the needs of all students.

As an English teacher, I have learned to address the needs of all my students through my 15 years in the classroom.

But, imagine the potential impact if I and other teachers had access to a curriculum that *supported us* in reaching students outside of our cultural background.

Imagine what kind of teacher I could've been from the start if, when *I was a student*, a fuller history of who we are as Ohioans was offered to me. Imagine the cross-cultural friendships that would have been possible for me as a student and could have impacted the teacher I was when I first stepped into a classroom at 22 years old.

Imagine the different types of lessons I would have been able to craft to meet the needs of the learners in my room to meet the standards set forth.

This bill is wonderful because it provides more. More possibilities for students underrepresented in our current model curriculum.

More possibilities for connections between students because they will know more about each other.

More possibilities for a different world. One we can't imagine, and one we have always hoped our student could. HB 171, Educating for Ohio's Future, is about being connected through our histories and identities toward something new and better than what we've had and what we have historically offered Ohio students.

I respectfully urge the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee to consider my testimony and to vote yes in support of H.B. 171. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify in support of this legislation.