

Chair Brennen, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony today. My name is Marjorie McLellan and I am a retired Ohio public administration professor.

In my working years, I worked with students and graduate students preparing for careers in nonprofits and government, as well as teachers, public history professionals, and health care providers. I lead two major federally funded projects for Ohio school teachers. I also volunteered with and Chaired the board of an after school program from youth in a Middletown public housing development. I know that those teaching and working with you in the schools want the best for young people, their parents, and the school communities that they work in. They spend long hours outside the classroom in professional development learning about current research in their disciplines and in classroom management and addressing student needs. Many entered the profession to help children and serve their communities.

One thing they didn't enter the profession for was to be the target of endless lawsuits regarding what is taught in the classroom.

According to a 2022 report from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Development, teacher departure rates from the profession were up over past years, often due to "deteriorating partnerships with parents."

HB 8 will exacerbate fraught relationships between teachers and parents and harm our communities. When we make K-12 education a minefield for teachers and staff by criminalizing what teachers discuss in the classroom, we raise the cost and undermine the outcomes of educating children in Ohio for all taxpayers.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.