

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Daniel Miles. I have been an Ohioan since I moved to Columbus in 2011 to study linguistics at OSU. Education is what brought me to Ohio, and that is why I am so disheartened to see HB 8 threaten the quality of education in Ohio. I am providing this written testimony because I am strongly opposed to House Bill 8.

I believe HB 8 will seriously impair the ability of our Ohio educators to teach their students. "Sexuality content" is so broadly and vaguely defined that the bill's language will force teachers to second guess the vast majority of their materials. The way the bill is written would allow any lesson that mentions gender, romance, or someone's marriage to be challenged, which would seem to make teaching subjects like history or literature all but impossible.

Of course, the intent of the bill is clear in spite of its nebulous language – it seeks to make LGBTQ topics and identities unmentionable, and LGBTQ students unsafe, with no recourse to privacy. This too is against what Ohio education should stand for. Throughout my education, exposure to a wider range of views has better helped me understand the world around me as well as myself. Giving students the space to question and figure out their own identities, free from the impositions of government overreach, is essential to their development.

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