

Testimony of Hongmei Li-Byarlay, Ph.D.
Before the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee
Senator Jerry Cirino, Chair
April 16th, 2023

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Workforce and Higher Education Committee:

My name is Hongmei Li-Byarlay, and I am a professor of Entomology at Central State University, where I have taught for 5 years. I do not represent Central State University but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 83.

I am strongly opposed to Senate Bill 83 and its companion bill in the Ohio House. SB 83 attacks academic freedom, tenure, and students' freedom to learn. SB 83 weaponizes "intellectual diversity" to censor honest, inclusive education and critical thinking. This bill dismisses race, culture, identity, and lived experiences as "controversial beliefs and policies". Also, the bill attacks workers' rights, creating unfit working conditions and unsafe learning environments. In summary, this bill will leave students unprepared for multicultural, global workplaces that prioritize DEI and critical thinking.

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

Regards,
Hongmei Li-Byarlay, Ph.D.