

Chairman Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Ashlyn White. I am a senior from Kent State University studying Interior Design and Spanish and will be graduating in May. I am strongly opposed to Senate Bill 83 and its companion bill in the Ohio House.

Free speech is a very important right of every American, and this bill proposes prohibitions of programs, extra-curriculars, and study of certain topics, which violates this right. This bill wants to control free speech and education in Ohio and does not create intellectual diversity, but directly prohibits free intellectual diversity. As a student this is very concerning to see public universities which are important institutions of society's growth have a state driven agenda.

As a student who is a woman and LGBTQ+ identifying person, I understand that organizations and discussion of topics personal to me, creates community at college. Taking these away from women, LGBTQ+ individuals, diverse racial groups in multiple formats is working to take away a sense of community and freedom of expression in education. This is the total opposite of what a University education is meant to provide and does not reflect the diverse world we live in.

With so many other issues in the United States such as gun violence, poverty, homelessness, and many other topics, restricting the free speech and education in Ohio should not be a focus for the Ohio Senate.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this [harmful/dangerous/important/life-saving/etc.] bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.