

Testimony of David Hoffmann, Ph.D.
Before the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee
Senator Jerry Cirino, Chair
April 17, 2023

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

My name is David Hoffmann, and I am a professor of history at The Ohio State University, where I have taught for 28 years. I do not represent Ohio State, but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 83.

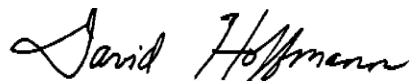
I strongly oppose Senate Bill 83 due to its many harmful provisions. Among those provisions are rules about what must be taught and what cannot be taught in history classes. These regulations clearly violate values we hold dear—freedom of speech and academic freedom. Moreover, the regulations in Senate Bill 83 will detract substantially from educators’ ability to expose students to a wide range of ideas.

Senate Bill 83 appears to be based on a fundamental misunderstanding of what goes on in higher education. Professors do not attempt to indoctrinate students. My colleagues and I place great value on encouraging students to think for themselves. In history courses, we assign a wide range of readings from different viewpoints and encourage students to assess those readings and come to their own conclusions.

I have always thought that Republicans oppose government regulation and intervention in people’s lives. Yet this Republican-sponsored bill represents a blatant attempt to impose government control that would eliminate freedom of speech and academic freedom on our college campuses.

I strongly urge you to dismiss this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Hoffmann". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Hoffmann
136 King Street
Lancaster, OH 43130