

Testimony of Jazmine Williams
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 Jazmine Williams, and I am a student at Miami University, where I have attended for the last 4 years. I do not represent Miami University but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 83.

If this bill passes as written, I will have no reason to continue to live in Ohio upon graduation. I want to make a career helping people who are members of marginalized communities and letting them know that they have a place in Ohio and that we as Ohioans want to make our state a better place for everyone. By the passing of this bill, many colleges and universities will not be able to deliver on their promises to create well-informed citizens who are prepared to step into the workforce. Students will not be able to meet people who have shared identities through student organizations, which is a huge vehicle for socializing here at Miami University. Until coming to school at Miami, I always thought that my race was going to be an obstacle that I had to overcome and it wasn't until I joined an organization where I was surrounded by amazing black women that I knew how special it was to be black. During my time here I took classes that allowed me to learn just how resilient black people are, from running away from the horrors of slavery to gaining the right to vote, and even electing the first Black President. Passing a bill like this tells every marginalized person that in the state of Ohio that their stories do not matter, that their voices do not matter and that they do not matter.