

Courtney Bockbrader, School Psychology Student
University of Dayton, Department of Counselor Education & Human Services

Jerry Cirino, Andrew Brenner, Terry Johnson, Rob McColley, Sandra O'Brien, Michele Reynolds, Kristina Roegner, Michael Rulli, and members of the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Courtney Bockbrader, and I am a current first year school psychology graduate student at the University of Dayton. I am here to express my concerns with Senate Bill 83 in its entirety, but I would like to specifically emphasize the section that is posing to ban mandatory Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training and opportunities for faculty and students to engage in conversations surrounding diversity, race, gender, sexuality, faith, and more.

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) requires that accredited school psychology programs educate their students about equitable practices for diverse populations. And for good reason; working with diverse populations is a core part of what we do as school psychologists. It is vital that we are competent when working with people of all backgrounds, and this means incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion into our training. This law would result in all Ohio school psychology programs losing their accreditation from NASP. A degree from a NASP-accredited program is required to become a licensed school psychologist in the state of Ohio. As a result, if this bill were to become law, myself and all other Ohio school psychology students would no longer be accredited to work in this state.

Beyond the school psychology program, SB 83 would affect many communities with whom I work with. Individuals of color, LGBTQ+ communities, parents, students, and educators across the state would be directly impacted due to the infringement that this bill poses on students at universities that wish to educate themselves on the experiences of diverse populations that may be different from their own. Students obtain an education to learn, not just about their specific major or course of study, but how to be a well-rounded individual who can interact with society and join organizations that allow them to explore real-world topics surrounding race, gender, sexuality, faith, and diversity.

In summary, I am testifying against the passing of Senate Bill 83. All individuals attending or working in higher education and the communities all across Ohio will be impacted by the passing of this bill. I ask that you please consider my testimony and vote no on SB 83. Thank you for your time.