

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 on SB83. My name is Dana McTigue and I am a scientist, a parent, and faculty member at Ohio State University College of Medicine.

I strongly oppose Senate Bill 83 and its companion bill in the Ohio House for several reasons. First, I have a close family member who is transgender and the ability to have support groups and supportive housing at OSU was the main reason she chose to attend OSU. Being able to attend college in a supportive environment was crucial to her ability to focus on her studies.

From my perspective as a faculty member, for the past 17 years I have taught, mentored, and interacted with students at every level. I have personally seen the harm that comes to underrepresented students when they do not have access to supportive groups and environments. By prohibiting groups based on race, sex or gender identity, this bill will cause significant mental harm to our students. This in turn will negatively impact their studies which eventually will harm the workforce of Ohio.

I also have the perspective of coming from an economically disadvantaged background and being a first-generation college student. By preventing diversity-related initiatives and training, this bill will harm many students from poor backgrounds in rural Ohio. Rather than harming their chances, we should collectively be developing more programs to encourage and support them.

Lastly, as a proud member of the Ohio State community, I am concerned what this bill will do for faculty hiring and retention. I have personally heard of faculty considering leaving Florida universities due to policies like those in SB83. While the bill purports to want to encourage “intellectual diversity”, it will achieve the exact opposite. Passing this bill will guarantee we will lose many of the incredibly smart, creative, and dedicated educators in Ohio colleges and universities. This will not only harm the current students but will harm all of us since our future doctors, lawyers, educators, and more will be trained in subpar environments that do not compete with those in more progressive states.

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

Dana McTigue, PhD
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