Name: Abygail Deemer

Testimony:

Hello my name is Abygail Deemer. I am a freshman Biology student at Kent State University and a First-Year Intern for Undergraduate Student Government. I am strongly against Senate Bill 83, the Ohio Higher Education Enhancement Act regarding the operation of state institutions of higher education. Through campus connections I have made I have heard effects this bill could have on different areas of study at Kent State University. Beginning with Kent State's well acclaimed Architecture and Design program. Kent will lose its accreditation if we are unable to teach students how to design for inclusion and diverse groups. We have many faculty and staff members who are passionate regarding this type of design and many have won awards for commitment to inclusion. Their students should be given the privilege of having an inclusive outlook on design, Senate Bill 83 stifles this. Similarly, Kent State's Peace and Conflict studies has impacted my education first hand through a course on inclusive mediation and conflict management. The course truly changed the way I interacted with other students and adjusted my worldview. The School of Peace and Conflict studies has over 30 courses surrounding education of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Losing courses like the one I took as well as Race, Class & Feminist Thought; Race, Gender & Social Justice; and Power, Conflict & the Politics of Gender is truly disheartening. The fact of the matter is, higher education students are intelligent enough to know the truth from lies.

Furthermore, outside of the classroom Kent State has made substantial efforts in being an inclusive campus. The campus's inclusivity and diversity initiatives draws students into the campus because it is a safe place for incoming students to be themselves. I was fortunate enough to attend a convention located at Texas A&M university and quickly came to notice how much

diversity, equity, and inclusion was valued on Kent's campus in comparison to other campuses nationwide. This realization was something I was extremely proud of. When reading the implications of Senate Bill 83, I have come to realize that some of what made me so proud to be a Kent State student will be stripped from me.

With that said, diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts have made their way into organizations at a rapid rate on our campus. As an active member of the greek life community, the DEI initiatives within fraternity and sorority life reach demographics of students that may not actively take the time to become more educated on topics regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion. Senate Bill 83 will rid my campus of all of the DEI initiatives that were put forth by the Panhellenic and Interfraternal council. DEI initiatives create more empathetic and understanding students. The thought of ridding students of educational opportunities like these should be devastating. There is a large presence of Integrated Greek Council on our campus, a division of student organizations indenting to provide a forum that allows for the free exchange of ideas, programs, and services between its constituent fraternities and sororities; to promote the awareness of multicultural diversity within collegiate institutions, their surrounding communities, and the greater community-at-large. Once again, Senate Bill 83 plans to limit or eliminate the Integrated Greek Council, an organization that has given a home and a voice to so many minority students. One of many truly devastating effects of Senate Bill 83.

The depth of our education should be up to those who are learning. To erase the diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts from my place of education is to weaken the ability of any student to gain a well-rounded education. Furthermore, this bill actively retracts parts of Kent State University that make it feel like home for some many students, including myself. I hope the

foregoing information as well as personal experience regarding the effects of House Bill 83 is

well received. I appreciate the opportunity to speak.