

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Workforce and Higher Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Carson Corley. I am a third year student at the Ohio State University from Senate District 8. I am also a proud Ohio public high school graduate. I am here to express my opinion on SB 83. But first I want you to understand, I am not a college student indoctrinated by a radical, liberal ideology that is often associated with higher education institutions. I dream of becoming an Officer in the Marine Corps and of one day raising a family that respects and values our country's democracy.

I strongly believe that Conservatives and Liberals need to disagree in order for our democratic system to work. This means I believe in having Candace Owens and other Conservative Activists speak on campus. I believe that Young Republicans should unabashedly speak what they believe without fear of retribution from professors. I also believe that police brutality and climate change are real, pressing issues of society that we must be able to discuss on college campuses. Frankly, what has made me grow as a student, person, and member of our diverse, complex state is experiencing these things as a student of Ohio State.

The most important experience I have been a part of as a student at Ohio State was participating in the class called Conversations on Morality, Politics, and Society, or COMPAS. In COMPAS we talked about ideological issues like Echo Chambers of political opinions and social justice, and policy issues like free speech on campus and prison reform. Through discussing and debating these topics, my classmates and I benefitted from the expression of free speech and dissenting opinions. We realized the value of not making speech that you disagree with illegal. We need to be able to discuss these issues honestly and with respect for every participant of the conversation. However, most of these conversations would have been outlawed under Ohio SB 83.

I can understand the fears of what would happen without this bill. As Senators, you don't want Ohio's higher education institutions to become a systemic indoctrination of Ohio's youth into a hatred for our country and state. We need a healthy system where Conservative and Liberal values are respected. I too want a system where these things are protected. But the education system I want is not the one you want. I want a system that provides students all the information and the opinions from both sides of the issue, where they can have debates and discussions freely with information that is accurate. I want opinions to be valued but not blindly accepted. This is the system I have seen, been a part of, and will continue to fight for.

SB 83 places limitations on our democracy through our education system. It limits students' creativity of thought, the ability for students to change, and damages the relationship between schools and their community. If the goal of this committee is to truly educate Ohio's youth and safeguard them from educational indoctrination, then as a student of the Ohio State University, a product of Ohio's public education system and a proud Ohioan, I implore you to not vote in support of SB 83.