

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 today. My name is Kylee Mathews. I am a second-year student at Miami University in Oxford. I am a psychology major with a minor in criminology. I am from Dayton, Ohio. I am strongly opposed to Senate Bill 83 and its companion bill in the Ohio House.

Before I begin, I would like to remind you all of what the first amendment is intended to protect. According to Cornell Law School's website, freedom of speech is "the right to speak, write, and share ideas and opinions without facing punishment from the government." I ask that you keep that in mind as I continue.

I've always attended predominantly white schools. During my K-12 education, I was never given the opportunity to join any groups or spaces that were meant for minorities because those schools never had any of those spaces. Spaces that allowed us to talk about our race, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, etc. Going to college meant that I could finally have the opportunity to be involved in those groups. I looked forward to being able to share my story with others and getting to hear other's stories as well.

As a person of color (African American and Mexican), it is important to me to feel included. I chose to go to Miami because it would give me a good education, which includes being able to take classes about sex, sexuality, race, and gender identity. How am I supposed to feel valued and included when I don't have those spaces?

Like any university, there are pros and cons. While I am able to receive a good education at Miami, it is not a school that is culturally diverse. In case you were unaware, Miami is considered to be a PWI (predominantly white institution). However, the university does have clubs and organizations that are designed to include people like myself.

If this bill were to be passed, my ability to feel included, safe, and heard would be in jeopardy because this bill would ban those groups that allow me to feel that way. Having those spaces is crucial for myself and other minorities to succeed and to build connections with other students and faculty.

I don't want an "education" that consists of the whitewashed version of the truth. I want to learn the FULL truth. Not bits and pieces put together that make this country look good and cover up what really happened. There's no denying that much of the K-12 education I've received has been slanted and whitewashed.

If I'm learning about ANYTHING, I want the full truth. Each and every minority group deserves to have their history taught **correctly**. Uncomfortability is not a valid reason to ban those topics.

Being able to talk about "controversial topics" helps people learn how to communicate and think critically about topics. "Controversial topics" are only seen as "controversial" because

they are topics that make white people uncomfortable and make them not want to talk about it. Just because YOU feel uncomfortable does not mean you have a valid reason to strip valuable information from others.

All I want is to be able to attend college, make friends, get good grades, be social, grow as a person, and start my career. Instead, I'm worrying about whether or not my graduating class and graduating classes behind me will be able to get a good education. An education that includes the truth and isn't whitewashed.

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

I will now take any questions you may have.