

Testimony of **Lillian Ann Ivey**
Before the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee
Senator Jerry Cirino, Chair
April 17, 2023

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Workforce and Higher Education Committee:

My name is **Lillian Ivey**, and I am a student studying **Fashion Design** at **Kent State University**. I do not represent **Kent State**, but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 83.

Let me give you an example of a conversation I had in elementary school. I attended a school in southern Louisiana. We were learning about the civil war. The teacher said something along the lines of “the civil war was fought over states rights, some of the states rights.” Having attended school in Ohio before then, I raised my hand and said “I thought it was fought over slavery.” They told me that was one of the state rights they were fighting for. And I said “but slavery was the main one right?” My teacher said no. Imagine my confusion when I attended high school, then university in Ohio and learned the truth. I will tell you one thing. I felt much more uncomfortable being lied to than learning the truth.

Avoiding controversy by diluting history fosters hate! I vividly remember arguing with peers over whether the confederate flag is offensive or “just a symbol of southern pride,”

Even as a straight white woman, experiencing an education that avoided controversy made me feel more uncomfortable and threatened than learning controversial truth!

I never felt uncomfortable in either of my diversity requirement classes. In fact one of them never included anything “controversial,” we just learned about the type of music people listen to around the world. Yet, this bill would take that away. In the other class, I learned a comprehensive history discussed with contextual evidence and viewpoints. This class did not hinder my ability to think critically, rather it allowed me to look at historical evidence and decide for myself the morality behind it.

We are two weeks away from the anniversary of the May 4th shooting at Kent State, when our own National Guard shot at students protesting the Vietnam War. Four students were murdered while speaking up for what they believed in. Students at universities throughout Ohio, especially Kent, value our institutions and the right to an accurate and truthful education. So you can expect backlash from students over this bill.

As far as the “confucius law,” and its ban on working with China, people associated with the People's Republic of China, and students receiving funding from outside the US. You are forgetting that international students are members of our communities. You have dehumanized international students to the point that you forget this bill would negatively impact the rest of the community. International students are: My friends. My peers. My classmates. Many become our professors. We share meals in the dining hall with them. They study in the library with us.

Our communities thrive from contributions from international students not to mention: the funding they bring with them. Did you know that international students pay the full tuition plus international fees? How do you plan to make up for that funding?

Not to mention government overreach. We don't want the government all up in our education. I don't want my highly educated professors to be scared that what they say could damage their career even if it is true. I am currently receiving an education from the leaders in each field of every class. These professors know more about their focus than anyone knows about anything. They are the people doing the research and setting industry standards. We deserve to learn an unsanitized version of their extensive knowledge.

Senators, are you trying to prevent the younger generation from learning the truth about your very own “controversial” decisions?

Or, senators, is it to distract us about the hearing about trans healthcare going on right now? Or to distract us from the restrictive reproductive healthcare legislation.

I challenge you to listen to us. Represent us by making decisions based on what we are telling you today.

And senators, I will see you when you release the anti-abortion legislation. Expect resistance!

Thank you for your time.