

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

Thank you for allowing me this time to speak today. My name is Kyle Peters, I am a 1st year student at Ohio State. I am from New Middletown Ohio, about 20 minutes South of Youngstown.

I am a firm believer in intellectual diversity and freedom of speech, which is why I oppose Senate Bill 83. My gripes with the bill center around most of the new policies regarding Higher Education.

I'm going to Ohio State with the intent of becoming a History teacher, and despite that, I think that requiring an American History course be taken while arguing against DEI courses work contrary to one another. DEI courses aren't simply a lecture about how we should all be nicer to one another, they often take the form of intellectually rigorous History, Sociology, and Philosophy courses just to name a few. These classes often end up being just as important to a student's education as other General Education courses, and there's enough variety among them to give students options to select the classes that will benefit them the most.

While I'm not entirely opposed to American History courses, I'm planning on teaching it after all, I do think it is wholly unnecessary to require them, as American History is covered extensively in most Secondary School curricula. Furthermore, an American History course would fulfil already existing GE requirements, giving many students an incentive to take said course without it being required of them to do so.

That's why I believe that requiring a specific course to be taken while forbidding the requirement of an entire field of study because the themes could be seen as "controversial" goes against the idea of intellectual diversity. If it is believed that the requirement for DEI courses is unnecessary, then the whole General Education curriculum should fall under question as I believe each required area of study in the curriculum.

Furthermore, as a person with LGBT+ family members, I take issue with the categorization of topics like allyship, social justice, and gender equity as controversial. These are topics that directly affect how we as members of a society interact and engage with one another, and if the purpose of education is to teach a person how to be a productive member of society, then learning about all the different people one is likely to meet in said society and how to interact with them is crucial to this purpose.

In conclusion, I find the thought of adults being "indoctrinated" by the current curriculum to be, quite frankly, ludicrous. The current curriculum allows for people of all backgrounds and opinions to pick classes that they think would help them the most, and the changes proposed in this bill will only hinder the ability of Colleges to create a better society by and for the people of the United States of America and that's why I ask you all to consider my testimony and vote "no" on Bill 83, thank you.