

Testimony of **Namiko Kunimoto, Ph.D.**
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 Namiko Kunimoto, and I am a professor of History of Art at Ohio State University, where I have taught for ten years. I do not represent Ohio State, but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 83.

I strongly oppose this bill for numerous reasons. Firstly, DEI training is necessary for a just workplace. It improves the educational experience of students, staff, and faculty. Many students have spoken with me about the difficulties of racism in the academic institution. Without DEI training, students of color will face even greater challenges at the university.

It is also inconceivable that a university would exist without discussion of controversial topics. What is controversial to some is not controversial to others. How can we educate without rich discussions about race, colonialism, gender, and other ongoing structures of power? What exists outside these structures?

Banning academic relationships with China is not acceptable. Almost all universities have institutions that study China. We must be knowledgeable about the world to exist in it. Chinese students are an important part of our university community, and you may be surprised by their large contribution to the local economy as well.

Like all workers, faculty have a right strike.

I urge you to respect the rights of BIPOC people, trans and queer people, and support equal access to education.

Sincerely,

Namiko Kunimoto