

Testimony for Senate Bill 83
Senate Committee on Workforce and Higher Education
April 18, 2023

Mickayla Nelson, Student at OSU

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 Mickayla Nelson and I am a current student at The Ohio State University. I am a second-year majoring in Social Work and feel strongly about this bill because it will greatly impact this campus in a negative way. I am advocating in support of social justice and the right to express our freedom of speech. I believe this entire bill adds more restrictions on our First Amendment rights and is specifically targeted toward ethnic groups and people of color.

Being a social work student, I am very passionate about social justice and the ability to speak about it on campus as well as attending events that are promoting it. Restrictions like this will impact my education and future career by not allowing these important issues to be addressed and supported with change. As many may know, there is a wide variety of diversity at OSU and it is important to acknowledge that as well as provide resources for everyone to feel included. The mandatory requirement of an American Government class excludes the right and opportunity to choose classes that each individual is interested in as well as pushing the agenda that American history is most important.

Many say that Ohio State is its own community and separate from the rest of Columbus, but it takes everyone to push for change. This bill will not only affect the students but also the faculty, where many live in the Columbus area. Faculty and students working at institutions should have the right to strike because of inequality and to defend themselves against possible oppression. This could negatively impact educators across the state to be more susceptible to discrimination and injustice.

I am testifying on behalf of myself as a student at The Ohio State University and other students who may feel negatively impacted by this bill if it is passed. Not only will I personally be impacted, but other students and faculty across the state will be affected. This includes all of Ohio's public universities and the future generations of higher education. I ask that you please consider the impact and my testimony by voting no.

Thank you.