

April 18, 2023

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 Dr. Heather Tubbs Cooley, tenured professor of nursing and a researcher recruited to Ohio from the University of Pennsylvania. I receive federal research grants from the National Institutes of Health and other research agencies including funding to study clinician bias as a potential mechanism for differential health outcomes in neonatal care. The research money I and colleagues bring to the state generates revenue for universities, directly creates jobs, and answers questions fundamental to the provision of high-quality health care. I am extremely concerned that the passage of SB 83, as written, will have an immediate and direct negative effect on Ohio's universities and health care organizations due to faculty departures and inability to recruit scientific talent – both faculty and graduate students - to the state. Many faculty I know nationally are watching SB 83 to determine whether they will remove Ohio universities from their job searches.

Additionally, I emailed Chairman Cirino and the bill co-sponsors on March 17 seeking clarification on the below questions but did not receive a response. My questions remain unanswered.

Lines	Topic	Question
72-109	Trustee training	How will the bill ensure the trustee trainings and sources of such trainings are free from political and/or ideological bias?
122	Biographical information on course instructors	What specific biographical information will be posted and what is the rationale for each element of required biographical information?
170-173	Keeping university life free of ideological interference	How does this language impact student life groups explicitly focused on favoring social and political causes, such as the Moritz Conservatives?
191-192	Perspectives poorly represented on Ohio public U campuses	What specific data unique to Ohio public universities support the assertion that the range of American opinion is not adequately reflected on Ohio campuses?
193-195	Specific concept	Does this include conservative concepts also, such as white nationalism, Christian nationalism, MAGA?
207-208	Mandatory DEI training	Are universities prohibited from offering voluntary DEI programs or training courses?
220-224	Intellectual diversity rubrics	How would these be guaranteed to be objective and free from developer and evaluator bias?

220-224	Intellectual diversity rubrics and associated reports	How much administrative and faculty time should be spent on development and evaluation of rubrics and reports in place of core duties?
390-395	Faculty workload	From what industry standard or established higher education productivity metric is the 30-credit hour annual minimum workload criterion established?
416-417	Student evaluation of classroom bias	Given extensive evidence that student evaluations of instruction are influenced by non-instructional attributes including instructor sex, race, and physical characteristics, how would the bill ensure that this high-stakes metric is free from student bias?
560-564	Academic relationships with China	Will study abroad programs to China be prohibited?

Finally, I urge the committee to take up the important issue of intellectual diversity by consulting with respected non-partisan organizations committed to ensuring freedom of speech on university campuses such as the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE). My university's Free Speech Rating is yellow, meaning we have room to improve. Senate Bill 83, as currently written, is unhelpful.

Thank you for considering my expertise and testimony. I urge you to vote NO on this bill.

Respectfully,

Heather L. Tubbs Cooley, PhD, RN, FAAN