

This is an emphatic request to vote NO on Senate Bill 83.

When I lived in Japan nearly a decade ago, the Japanese government at the time was criticized robustly for whitewashing their history books about atrocities committed during World War II. I am sure that most here, if not everyone, has an immediate adverse reaction to the thought of the Japanese government not being accountable for their past actions nor being transparent with future generations. Those who forget history are doomed to repeat it, we might say, in that situation.

Yet in 2023, throughout the U.S., individual states are racing to enact legislation that limits dialogue about American history under the guise of preventing “controversial beliefs and policies.” To dismiss, minimize, or exclude conversations or organizations about DEI violates American values and is a massive overreach of the government. It is deeply concerning that the ostensible premise of SB-83 is to protect free speech and promote intellectual rigor, when in reality, it does the exact opposite. The truth can withstand debate, and open and honest conversations are required for furthering interpersonal knowledge and for informing how people interact with each other, for promoting tolerance and kindness, for decreasing stereotypes and stigma, and for diminishing disparities. These are the building blocks of a stronger and safer Ohio.

Please vote NO.