

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 Sabrina Costello. I am a freshman philosophy major at Miami University. I am strongly opposed to Senate Bill 83 and its companion bill in the Ohio House.

I am here today to fight for my education, because in this country a college degree is the key to unlocking social and economic success. My argument is that Bill SB-83 would create an environment of ignorance that is not suitable for an institution of higher learning and would thus lead to my receiving an unsatisfactory education, which is unfair to students like myself who are paying so much to attend your colleges. The first part of my argument is that regardless of political affiliation, students at every one of your public universities come from different backgrounds. Their social identities differ in their racial backgrounds, family backgrounds, and economic backgrounds. Without touching on gender or sexuality, I would hope you will be able to grant me my first premise, and my second as well which is that your personal background is an essential part of who you are, and each student deserves not to feel disrespected because of that background which they cannot change. Without accessing any studies or statistics, I would hope we can agree on a student's right to feel respected, which is why regardless of your political leaning, I want to reinforce that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training, above all else, teaches professors to respect different racial backgrounds, ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds, as well as different genders and sexualities. Because we all come from different educational backgrounds many people are unaware of the different social identities people hold, and in order to feel respected in class, a student needs to be able to have their identities respected, which is why those training courses should be mandatory. If professors had the option to opt out of training, they may well still be ignorant of certain identities and that could lead to microaggressions as well as an environment of mistrust. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are not a "liberal agenda". They are taught so that any and all students attending your universities get the respect they deserve and it does pay off. According to a study done through the peer-reviewed International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, titled *The Effects of Diversity Training on Faculty and Students' Classroom Experiences* "Students experienced a greater sense of community, personal growth, and conflict resolution skills by being in the classes taught by faculty trained in multicultural course development"(1).

Finally, to take a more personal stance that is inherently more political, I would like to share how important it is for me to feel like a professor accepts all of my identities, and my peers' identities as well. To feel accepted is so important, and you don't have to agree with my politics to allow my human rights. No one should feel disrespected by their professors based on any of their social identities, and if they do feel that I predict you will notice your drop-out rates as well as your transfer rates will skyrocket, which should be something you don't want.

I ask you to please consider my testimony and vote NO on this *dangerous* bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

I will now take any questions you may have.

citation:

Booker, Keonya C.; Merriweather, Lisa; and Campbell-Whatley, Gloria (2016) "The Effects of Diversity Training on Faculty and Students' Classroom Experiences," International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Vol. 10: No. 1, Article 3. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.20429/ijsotl.2016.100103>