

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 Cindy Jones. I am a first generation, public educated, doctoral student pursuing a degree in Urban Educational Leadership. I am strongly opposed to Senate Bill 83 and its companion bill in the Ohio House.

I believe that every student deserves to go to college regardless of race, ethnicity, or social-economic background. The importance of a college education in narrowing the wealth gap inequity seen between Black and White students is of great significance. Barriers to education exist for students from historically marginalized communities, and these barriers must be addressed in educational policy to ensure that all students have a fair chance to succeed in higher education. SB 83 is a destructive effort that seeks to prohibit affinity groups and undermines efforts to promote diversity and equal opportunities for students, especially those who are most frequently left out or left behind. SB 83 is a regressive and damaging piece of legislation that would have serious negative consequences on marginalized students. Academic freedom, research, and quality education are in harm's way. SB 83 should be opposed in its entirety as it is extremely damaging for higher education in Ohio and to the state as a whole. I ask you to 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.