

**Opponent Testimony for S.B. 83 of Cameron Cavaliere
Before the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee
Senator Jerry Cirino, Chair
April 19, 2023**

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 Cameron Cavaliere. I am a graduate student at Miami University of Ohio who currently resides in Oxford, Ohio. I am in school obtaining my Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Composition and I am invested in the study and teaching of writing and communication. While I do not represent Miami University, I am a student with extreme concerns about S.B. 83 and how this legislation will affect the continuation of my education and my research and scholarly status here in Ohio.

As a student, I am interested in researching and learning about all kinds of topics, including how theories of gender and sexuality can impact how we view technology. As such, I am currently pursuing a certificate in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Miami. These courses are becoming the backbone of my scholarly identity, and have taught me to respect all people and treat everyone equally. As an educator as well, I want my students to have the opportunity to learn about topics that they are passionate about, no matter what that topic is. This bill attempts to strip away my ability to engage as a student and researcher with topics I am interested in. I do not force these topics on anyone and no one forces them on me. They are a choice. And this legislation takes away that choice, which is against everything I've come to believe in as an American. Everyone has the right to read and write about whatever they like. Freedom of speech is one of this country's finest values, and it's one that I think this bill disregards. I'm proud to be an American student and teacher because of our ability to write and produce scholarship that states our beliefs without censorship. This bill is the kind of thing that spits in the face of the founding fathers and their belief in the freedom of speech.

I and my fellow graduate students are very concerned that the very reasons we were drawn to these universities, the ability to support our research and freedom of speech, are about to be stripped away. The intellectual diversity that currently exists at Miami will be silenced by this bill, and those of us interested in researching how women and queer people exist in and navigate the world will be left in the dark, forced to either drop out or

completely give up on the academic dreams we have worked so hard to pursue. Those that come after us will go elsewhere to be allowed to pursue their research.

Senators, I ask you to please consider my testimony and vote no on this legislation, as this bill will reduce the quality of education offered in Ohio's universities and will cause many students to turn away from our great schools. We have so many amazing institutions of higher education in this state and it would be such a waste to attempt to censor and destroy them. Thank you for your time and willingness to listen to my and other students' perspectives.