

Testimony of Eva M. George, PhD.
Opponent Testimony for Senate Bill 83
Before the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee
Senator Jerry Cirino, Chair
April 18, 2023

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Workforce and Higher Education Committee:

My name is Dr. Eva George, and I am a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Education Instructional Development Specialist at The Ohio State University and a former faculty member at Capital University, where I have taught for 18 years. I do not represent The Ohio State University, but rather I am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 83.

I express grave concern over Senate Bill 83, particularly the sections that discuss diversity, equity, and inclusion. I am an African American lesbian who lives at the intersections of multiple identities. I assist others in understanding the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and seek to leave no one out of the conversation. Everyone has intersecting identities that make them the unique person they are. The passage of this bill could result in me not having a fulfilling career and that impacts me and my family directly. My life would have to be entirely re-written, yet it would be difficult for me to find work in higher education in Ohio, if this bill were to pass.

This bill, if passed, would have a huge impact on the work that many higher education institutions have worked so long and hard for since the Civil Rights Movement. Those who work to better understand our society through DEI work would be silenced, in a society that still grapples with intense race relations. To remedy those social problems, DEI work helps us to see our similarities and differences and works toward a more equitable society.

In closing, I reiterate and emphasize that the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion directors and offers has come out of a long struggle during the Civil Rights movement and promotes an understanding of diverse people, opinions, and lives. We still are grappling with some of the same problems from that era and still need DEI efforts to help solve them.

I ask that you please consider my testimony and vote no Senate Bill 83.

Thank you.