

Testimony of Astrid N. Sambolín Morales, Ph.D.
Before the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee
Senator Jerry Cirino, Chair
May 15, 2023

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Workforce and Higher Education Committee: My name is Astrid N. Sambolín Morales, and I am a professor of Cultural Foundations of Education at Kent State University. I **do not** represent Kent State University, but instead am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 83.

Senate bill 83, even after its revisions, would rob faculty unions of the right to collectively bargain for terms that will affect our employment, will increase the workload of faculty who already juggle overwhelming research, teaching, and service responsibilities, and would infringe on faculty's privacy by making their syllabi publicly accessible. The bill seems to amplify or create problems in higher education rather than solve them, and it does not reflect the desires of your constituency.

SB 83 is threatening the collective bargaining rights of faculty, removing the ability to effectively negotiate the terms of employment on essential issues like annual reviews, which are incredibly important in the tenure and promotion process. Moreover, it makes the Retrenchment Article of the TT CBA irrelevant. It seems the last time such measures were introduced in a bill and put for a citizen's veto referendum, the referendum was rightfully repealed. This should indicate that most of your constituents do not find these measures helpful or desirable. And yet, here we are again.

However, one of the most disturbing aspects of the bill is the increase in faculty workloads. Tenure-track faculty already have onerous requirements to fulfill to obtain tenure. We must publish peer-reviewed articles multiple times a year, write grant proposals to obtain external funding, teach courses, advise students, and serve on various committees to fulfill service obligations. Increasing the faculty's workload seems ludicrous given all we do already, and there is no justification for this item in the bill.

Finally, the most egregious component of this bill would force faculty to upload syllabi that professors create to share information with enrolled students. This step would force faculty to share their class, including assignments, reading lists, grading policies, and class expectations with random strangers who might not even be affiliated with the university. Syllabi also represent faculty expertise, and having strangers and laypeople "evaluate" the syllabi seems counterintuitive and downright harmful. Moreover, sharing syllabi allows anyone to retaliate against and potentially harass faculty members, despite not taking the class to begin with.

I have yet to meet one single faculty member or administrator who has anything favorable to find in this bill. Again, based on the overwhelming testimony in opposition to the bill, it's clear that many of those who will be directly affected by it do not find it useful or desirable. Anecdotal evidence about student complaints is not enough to pass a bill infringing on faculty's rights. Such drastic measures will only drive away talented faculty and make students second guess whether they want to attend an Ohio higher education institution.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

Astrid N. Sambolín Morales