



Dear Chairman Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Ingram, and esteemed members of the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee:

The Board of Public Education Partners is opposed to Sub. Senate Bill 83 and its companion bill in the Ohio House- HB 151. Public education advocates have seen more than their share of egregious legislation targeting K-12 public-school districts that serve most of Ohio's children and families, but now it appears that legislators have turned their sights on higher education as well.

Some of those same legislators promote extreme K-12 education policies with the claim that Ohio must strengthen its "workforce," yet many college students have vowed to leave Ohio upon graduation because of the current policy initiatives of the legislative majority. The best way to make sure we have enough young people to fill Ohio jobs is to put a stop to this extremism.

It's been said by Sen. Cirino that some changes were made "after input of a variety of interested parties and voices on some of the general concerns." While we may appreciate the effort, this bill is still deeply flawed.

Unfortunately, whenever an extreme law is introduced, and then changes make it less extreme, it still ends up being an extreme law. This happens often with the Ohio Legislature.

What do the experts say? [According to the Ohio Conference American Association of University Professors](#) (AAUP), which represents approximately 6,000 college and university professors at both public and private institutions of higher education across the State of Ohio, *Sub. HB 83 represents vast government overreach that undermines academic freedom, workers' rights, and institutional autonomy. In fact, this new version, in some respects, is worse than the original draft, particularly as it pertains to proposing new constraints on collective bargaining. It couldn't be clearer that Sen. Cirino is trying to take away bargaining power from faculty unions. This is the worst assault on union rights since Senate Bill 5 in 2011, and the worst assault on academic freedom that we have ever seen. We are still staunchly opposed to SB 83, and will continue to do everything in our power to prevent its passage.*

Sara Kilpatrick, executive director of the Ohio conference of the AAUP, added, "[A]re big employers like Intel still going to want to be here? Are we going to be able to provide these employers with employees that can think for themselves, that can communicate, that are well-rounded, that are adaptable? That's the things that faculty help students to hone when they're at an institution.... We're putting up a big red flag to faculty around the country that you don't want to come to Ohio."

Thanks to the AAUP for bringing up that very important point.

Last week, the Statehouse News Bureau reported that [Ohio is replacing its tourism-focused slogan](#) of "Ohio: Find it here," with the vintage phrase, "Ohio: the Heart of it all," because "Ohio: the Heart of it all" will hopefully do a better job representing the state's position as a center of education, technology, and family.

With extreme legislation like Sub. Senate Bill 83, why bother?

Sub. Senate Bill 83 is a shameful attempt to micromanage Ohio colleges, universities, and higher education faculty and staff on ideology that is rooted in the politically motivated culture wars.

Most Ohioans would agree that there should be much higher priorities for our elected leaders than culture war issues, which are a distraction from what is really happening and what really needs to be done at the Ohio Statehouse to support both K-12 and higher education in the Buckeye State.

Please vote NO on Sub. SB 83, a harmful bill that is the epitome of government overreach.

Thank you for your service!

Jeanne Melvin and the Board of

Public Education Partners

