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Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee
Senate Bill 83
Opponent Testimony

Robert A. Davis, Political & Legislative Director

Good Morning Chairman Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee. My name is Robert Davis, and I am the Political & Legislative Director of AFSCME Ohio Council 8; the union that represents more than 33,000 individuals that are employed in both the public and private sectors in Ohio and West Virginia. Their employers include municipalities, counties, public hospitals, K-12 public schools, and institutions of higher learning. I am submitting this written testimony to voice our organization's strong opposition to Senate Bill 83; legislation that would, among other things, strip away a fundamental right of workers in Ohio; the right to strike.

Since the passage of Ohio's collective bargaining law in 1983, individuals that are employed in the public sector in Ohio have had the ability to bargain collectively over wages, hours, and conditions of employment with their employer. This has led to not just better wages for workers, but also safer workplaces and better employee/employer relationships. Prior to the passage of the law, Ohio's saw an average of 50 – 70 public sector strikes per year. Since that time Ohio has seen a substantial decline in work stoppages and an overall improvement in both employer and employee satisfaction. However, there comes a time when workers and management can reach an impasse where an agreement cannot be met and therefore there must be tools available for both sides to use.



AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO



The ability for a worker to withhold their labor is the sole tool that workers possess to avoid being totally at the mercy of their employer. It helps in driving more positive contract negotiations whereby employers will not experience a disruption in the services they provide, and employees will not experience a loss in pay due to the *“No work, No pay Principle.”*

Please know that while it is not the desire of members of our union to have to strike to achieve equitable pay, benefits, and respect on the job, the ability to strike is an indispensable part of the collective bargaining procedure. It provides workers with the opportunity to have input in the creation of rules that govern the workplace, and any diminishing of this right weakens the entire collective bargaining process.

Chairman Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Smith and members of the committee, we hope that you give our concerns with Senate Bill 83 outlined in this written testimony thoughtful consideration and we stand ready to respond to any questions or concerns you may have. Thank you.