



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 Senate Bill 117, another vague piece of unnecessary legislation targeting higher education in Ohio. Why would any legislator feel the need to mandate higher ed centers, which duplicate some existing programs, using a policy that doesn't even make sense?

SB 117 would use taxpayer dollars to create the Salmon P. Chase Center for Civics, Culture, and Society at Ohio State and the Institute of American Constitutional Thought and Leadership at the University of Toledo's College of Law.

[Sen. Cirino said using public funds to create centers at colleges is not unheard of.](#)

“Both Arizona State University and the University of Florida have created similar centers to aide in establishing diverse viewpoints at their respective universities,” Cirino said in his testimony.

SB 117 would give UT \$1 million in fiscal year 2024 and \$2 million in fiscal year 2025 for the Institute, and Ohio State \$5 million in fiscal years 2024 and 2025 for the Center.

Senate Bill 117 is another 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 using public dollars to fund culture war issues- a complete 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 SB 117, a very expensive initiative that is the epitome of government overreach.

Thank you for your service!

Jeanne Melvin and the

Board of Public Education Partners