

To Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to voice my opinion and testify today. My name is Cynthia Porter. I am an Ohio citizen. I am here to urge the committee to amend Sec. 9.05. (A) and remove Section 3345.451 from the state budget bill.

Particularly, Section 3345.451 would require boards of trustees to have the final say on all curriculum and academic programs at Ohio's public colleges and universities. Please find brief descriptions of each proposed amendment to H B 96 below.

First, I'm in opposition to the following components of Sec. 9.05. (A) of the House Bill 96, providing reasons why:

- Current iteration in HB96: (1) "Boy" means a juvenile human male.
 - Opposition: I oppose the phrase "'Boy' means a juvenile human male."
 - Why:
 - "Boy" is a term tied to the expression and demonstration of gender. Gender is a socially created concept fundamentally separate from sex and sex organs (ex. "male"), yet gets socialized into behavioral expectations and language ("boy") tied to and socially reinforced in accordance with assigned sex at birth. Since "boy" is a term to reflect gender, rather than sex ("male"), a governmental entity to impose such a power dynamic over a civilian's right to self-identify is inappropriate and infringes upon the individual's rights. An individual's identification as a "boy," since gender is an expression or an idea, and is therefore a matter of opinion of what a "boy" is – making the term, as speech, subject to the protection of the First Amendment. For this reason, this segment should be removed from the bill.
- Current iteration in HB96: (3) "Gender identity" means an individual's internal and subjective sense of self, disconnected from biological reality and sex and existing on an infinite continuum, that does not provide a meaningful basis for identification and cannot be recognized as a replacement for sex.
 - Opposition: I oppose the phrase "that does not provide a meaningful basis for identification."
 - Why:
 - Infringement of Rights: The subjective phrase of "meaningful basis" assumes a power dynamic that falls beyond what is appropriate for a government body to have over an individual, civilian body. An individual's "meaningful basis for [self] identification" would fall under the protection of the First

Amendment. For this reason, These words should be removed from the bill.

- Harm: A governmental body endeavoring to impose power over the individual citizen's right to self-identification could lead to irreparable mental harm, which may then lead to other forms of harm (ex. self-harm). For this reason, these words should be removed from the bill.
- Current iteration in HB96: (4) "Girl" means a juvenile human female.
 - Opposition: I oppose the phrase "'Girl' means a juvenile human female."
 - Why:
 - "Girl" is a term tied to the expression and demonstration of gender. Gender is a socially created concept fundamentally separate from sex and sex organs (ex. "female"), yet gets socialized into behavioral expectations and language ("girl") tied to and socially reinforced in accordance with assigned sex at birth. Since "girl" is a term to reflect gender, rather than sex ("female"), a governmental entity to impose such a power dynamic over a civilian's right to self-identify is inappropriate and infringes upon the individual's rights. An individual's identification as a "girl," since gender is an expression or an idea, and is therefore a matter of opinion of what a "girl" is – making the term, as speech, subject to the protection of the First Amendment. For this reason, this segment should be removed from the bill.
- Current iteration in HB96: (6) "Man" means an adult human male.
 - Opposition: I oppose the phrase "'Man' means an adult human male."
 - Why:
 - "Man" is a term tied to the expression and demonstration of gender. Gender is a socially created concept fundamentally separate from sex and sex organs (ex. "male"), yet gets socialized into behavioral expectations and language ("man") tied to and socially reinforced in accordance with assigned sex at birth. Since "man" is a term to reflect gender, rather than sex ("male"), a governmental entity to impose such a power dynamic over a civilian's right to self-identify is inappropriate and infringes upon the individual's rights. An individual's identification as a "boy," since gender is an expression or an idea, and is therefore a matter of opinion of what a "man" is – making the term, as speech, subject to the protection of the First Amendment. For this reason, this segment should be removed from the bill.
- Current iteration in HB96: (8) "Woman" means an adult human female.
 - Opposition: I oppose the phrase "'Woman' means an adult human female."
 - Why:

- “Woman” is a term tied to the expression and demonstration of gender. Gender is a socially created concept fundamentally separate from sex and sex organs (ex. “female”), yet gets socialized into behavioral expectations and language (“woman”) tied to and socially reinforced in accordance with assigned sex at birth. Since “girl” is a term to reflect gender, rather than sex (“female”), a governmental entity to impose such a power dynamic over a civilian’s right to self-identify is inappropriate and infringes upon the individual’s rights. An individual’s identification as a “woman,” since gender is an expression or an idea, and is therefore a matter of opinion of what a “woman” is – making the term, as speech, subject to the protection of the First Amendment. For this reason, this segment should be removed from the bill.

I’m also writing in opposition to Sec. 3345.451 (B) of the House Bill 96, providing reasons why:

- Opposition: I oppose the phrase “the board of trustees may not delegate the board’s authority to adopt a curricular approval process under this section or to approve or reject academic programs.”
- Why:
 - Given the academic freedom of academics, it remains paramount that we consult them as experts in matters of academic/curricular design and development. This is of utmost importance for a range of reasons:
 - Academics (K-12; higher education) are trained to facilitate curriculum development for the best pedagogical/teaching benefit for their students and continued knowledge production. Educators certified in the state of Ohio undergo rigorous schooling, training, practical development, and pedagogical/teaching methodological development, making their voices fundamentally essential in discussions of curricular review and approval.
 - Exclusion of teaching professionals from conversations of curricular approval, including those of academic programs, decentralizes the professionals who are facilitators of education to Ohio students. Engaging in a disjointed approach to curricular review and revision will have a degenerative impact on teaching and learning in the classroom. The deterioration will be due to the disconnect between those who are informed (through experience) of what components of education need to be observed in the process of curricular design and development – teacher/educators – and what this adjustment would enact as being solely in the hands of the board of trustees. For the sake of the continued maintenance of quality and rigorous educational standards in the state of Ohio, this section should be either completely removed or amended to require the delegation of curricular design, maintenance,

improvement/adjustment/refinement to the faculty and teaching staff, themselves, as well as faculty committees (depending at what degree of organization we are discussing – ex. the General Education review committee) comprised of educators who will be directly involved in the concerns of maintaining academic goals, methods of practice in the classroom, and those who will be facilitating education in educational settings.

Please take this testimony into consideration as you deliberate the state budget bill and its potential impact on our state, students, citizens, and broader society.

Thank you for your time and attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cynthia D. Porter