

Verbal Testimony / Written Testimony

Hello, my name is Isaiah Baughman, and I am a senior at the Ohio State University. I am studying social work, and I am concerned about the future of my education as someone who intends to start a master's degree in this field.

This Senate Bill limits diversity, equity, and inclusion, restricts free speech, and limits workers' rights. It also threatens the integrity of our education system as a whole, specifically social work education.

The Council on Social Work Education's accreditation standards require social work programs to teach competency in diversity, privilege, oppression, and intersectionality. These requirements have been in place since 1952.

By banning the content required for CSWE accreditation, social work programs risk losing accreditation, and without accreditation, Ohio Social Work graduates may not be able to receive licensure. Licensure is required for crucial mental health services, like individual psychotherapy, and this will devalue these degrees and push students either out of the field or out of state to receive their education.

This is especially concerning because roughly 60% of mental health professionals are clinically trained social workers.

According to the Health Services and Resource Administration, there is projected to be a substantial shortage of mental health providers by 2036, and more than half of the U.S. population lives in a Mental Health Professional Shortage Area.

When deciding on this bill, consider the future ramifications on mental health in Ohio.