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## PROPONENT TESTIMONY

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DATE:

TO: Members of the House State and Local Government Committee

FROM:

RE: Support for H.B. 327: Prohibit Teaching, Advocating, or Promoting Divisive Concepts

Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the Ohio House State and Local Government Committee, I appreciate the members of this committee hearing proponent testimony on House Bill 327, legislation declaring that Ohio Prohibit Teaching, Advocating, or Promoting Divisive Concepts.

Enter testimony here and sign and date.

Hello. My name is Colleen Schitter. I reside in, and have a student in the Kings Local School District in Warren County, Ohio, where Critical Race Theory is poisoning the minds of our students. I am here today to ask for your help protecting our children. I work with a group of concerned citizens and will be referring to our group throughout this testimony.

I have two children. One hopes to be an educator. The other wishes to be a police officer. I worry about the divisive nature of CRT and the damage it's doing to our students, the consciences of our teachers, and to race relations. I worry and pray for our community, my son's future fellow officers, for our current officers, and for my son's future, as I see the country and our community that my son and I love so deeply become more and more divided and hostile, and thereby potentially more and more dangerous. And Critical Race Theory is a key factor in all of it.

Critical Race Theory is a political activist movement that developed from the Marxist theory called Critical Theory. That Critical Race Theory is a Marxist, political activist movement is undisputed, even by it's earliest proponents from the 70s such as Derrick Bell. I will not waste your time explaining it's origins. I trust each of you will diligently research the claims made by your colleagues and come to the same conclusion those who have sponsored this bill came to... that Critical Race Theory must be banned in Ohio.

In our school district, we are just beginning to uncover the extent to which Critical Race Theory is embedded into our curriculum. And of course, by curriculum, I mean everything from the books the students are required to read and the assignments they are required to complete, to training for the staff, teachers, and administrators. Our concerns about Critical Race Theory began around January when the *first* concerned parent brought the book, Stamped: Racism, Anti-Racism, and You, a “remix” of the book Stamped From the Beginning, by Ibram X. Kendi, to our attention. The book was required reading for three advanced level English classes in high school. The classes, while classified as “elective”, were, as I understand, the only English IV “advanced” classes available. And the book, again, was *required* reading. This means that any student needing an advanced class for their fourth year of English, was required to read this book. And indeed, over 130 students in our high school read this book this past school year. A parent of one of those students came to us because her child expressed deep concerns about having to read this book. The student recognized the content to be exactly what it is... racist, divisive, Anti-American, historically inaccurate, political, and most troubling for her, Anti-Christian.

In addition to learning about this hate filled book that was required reading, we learned from others that the Marxist, anti-american, violent, political organization, Black Lives Matter, is being promoted in our school district and in our classrooms, becoming part of the Critical Race Theory programming.

We brought our concerns to the Board of Education, and for months, we were met with silence. Recently, a Board member publicly addressed our concerns. He’d read the book and had come to the same conclusions as our student had come to... that the book was racist, divisive, and filled with hate and historical inaccuracies. He posed questions to the Board and Administration as to our district policies on how curriculum is developed, reviewed and approved, and the process for removing curriculum once it is approved. He apologized for any role he played in approving Critical Race Theory in our school district through the book Stamped.

The backlash he received from doing so was intense. Accusations were made about his motives and his character. He was accused of being racist. A boycott of his business was called for. I was told he received hundreds of emails and phone calls. And the hateful backlash he received was largely from community members calling themselves

United Against Hate. Ironic, isn't it? But it gets better. United Against Hate has a Facebook page that is administered by the same person designated as our district's community liaison to our district's *official* DEI Committee. DEI stands for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, by the way. Diversity and Inclusion. Diversity of thought? Nope. Inclusive of others with opposing views? Nope.

As you continue your research, you will find words like diversity, equity, and inclusion used throughout the teachings of Critical Race Theory. But it's misnomer just like the name Critical Race Theory itself. CRT doesn't seek to offer critical thinking. It seeks to offer one and only one point of view; and that view is that America is systemically racist, was founded on slavery at the hands of terrible people called Christians, and is ran on a racial class system in which all white people are oppressors and all people of color are oppressed.

I am here today and spoke to you very briefly about some of the experiences we've had in our district. In short, Critical Race Theory is tearing our community apart. The Board of Education, like most Boards of Education in the state, is not taking action, and community members who speak against CRT are met by angry mobs who claim to advocate for diversity and inclusion all the while attempting to silence those who oppose them. I could give you many more stories for example, but I only have a few minutes of your time. I would venture a bet there are people in nearly every Ohio school district that could tell you all the same stories.

I am *here*, asking YOU to protect our children because it's clear our local School Boards of Education will not. I am asking YOU to protect our children because it is abundantly clear that the school administrators will not. I am asking YOU to protect our children because its been made clear that the Governor of Ohio will not. I am asking YOU to protect our children because the Ohio Board of Education not only refuses to protect our children but silence those who will. I am asking YOU to protect our children because Joe Biden seeks to usurp state sovereignty on this issue. I am asking YOU to protect our children in Ohio, and I am asking YOU to protect MY children... because NOBODY ELSE WILL.

Thank you for your time and allowing me to speak

Signed, Colleen Schitter

June 22, 2021