
PROPONENT TESTIMONY

DATE: June 23, 2021

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.

My son is a student at Solon High School. Over the course of his education, the book list they are required to read has gone from disappointing to abysmal. The English dept. seems intent in always putting children into categories and labeling them. I believe this is damaging to their development, and to their ability to connect with other students as individuals, as opposed to members of a particular class with prejudged attributes. The list of terrible books escalated last year, when he had to read "Dear Martin". In the book an innocent black student is constantly harassed by a racist white police officer. There's a character in the book that's a white student in Martin's class. When the character speaks up in a class discussion, he is dismissed as racist. The character simply brought up a conservative standpoint. I believe this is done on purpose so nobody in the actual class can speak any opposition to the book. Of course, any opposition to the prescribed theory that white people are racist is not tolerated anyway. There are several other examples of books and discussions that were not appropriate for High School students, but things took a turn for the worse this year (junior year), when they had to listen to a podcast, in English class, titled "It's More than Racism: Isabel Wilkerson Explains America's 'Caste' System" I believe this needs no explanation. Any idea that America has a Caste system is absurd and counterproductive. Keep in mind that parents were not told about it, and more importantly the students had no opportunity to debate or counter such an absurd idea. I have many other examples, but I will summarize by saying, critical race theory and similar ideologies are the opposite of what the civil rights movement was about. I was taught to treat people as individuals, not members of a group. I do understand there are many social issues that should indeed be taught to children, but I believe is a parent's job to do that. We have seen repeatedly that the teachers put their personal feelings and attitudes first, before even teaching the actual material. They have a bully pulpit and they use it.

Thomas M. Burke

6/21/2021