

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: September 21, 2021

Name: Patricia Enciso

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): _____

Position/Title: Professor and educator

Address: 100 Webster Park Ave.

City: Columbus State: OH Zip: 43214

Best Contact Telephone: 614-596-6972 Email: enciso.4@osu.edu

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): **HB 322 and HB 327**

Specific Issue: These bills create a management system and surveillance of teachers, school district administrators, and curricula associated with so-called 'divisive concepts'

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Are you testifying: In-Person Written-Only

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? _____

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

I have been an educator in Ohio for more than thirty years, as a fourth-fifth grade teacher, middle school teacher, and as a professor of education at Ohio State University. My mother and sister and her daughter were/are also educators. All of us value the democratic principles of freedom of speech and the right of all children to an honest and free education. We believe educators must understand history and help our students recognize and interpret past injustices such as racism, that are based in fear and hate. We know that if we allow children to be silent about the fear and hate they see and feel (on the news, among peers, and among family members) – they will create the conditions for fear and hate with one another and, very likely, in their young adult and adult lives. These bills ask families and children to be afraid that they will learn something painful. They elevate fear and suspicion of one another over learning, compassion, and hope.

Educators are knowledgeable about the materials, literature, curriculum and pedagogies that will support children to learn about and question the past, as they make informed decisions about the future. Educators are professionals who know their students and communities. We are cautious, and yet, informed and thoughtful about how we approach painful events and their interpretation. In order to teach about the past and changes in the present, we need to build a trusting classroom community – where people – in a democracy – can speak the truth and be open to questions. However, we cannot create classroom communities where children can honestly learn and think if we believe our actions could be reported to a committee or department (much like Stasi Germany or Maoist China) who could threaten our jobs and livelihoods. Would those people, appointed by some opaque process, sit in their offices (much like Orwell's 1984) be able to move a complaint along a chain of command that ends in the loss of state funding? Who would authorize this kind of power? This process is a setup for the end of democratic rights to a free, equitable and hopeful education. These bills open a door to the kind of surveillance that tore apart families, neighbors, and communities in totalitarian regimes for decades. Please. Close this door now before any further harm is done.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.