

Testimony on H.B. 322
Dr. Tiyi Morris
State and Local Government Committee
September 21, 2021

Chairman Scott Wiggam, Vice Chairwoman Marilyn John, Ranking Member Representative Brigid Kelly, and Members of the State and Local Government Committee,

Thank you for accepting my testimony on House Bill 322. My name is Dr. Tiyi Morris. I am an Associate Professor of African American and African Studies and a scholar of American History. I strongly oppose House Bill 322.

As a college professor, I oppose this bill because it censors and restricts honest education and accountability of our nation's past, present, and future, and severely polices what and how educators are allowed to teach this content. It is particularly problematic to have non-educators limit what we teach. Enslavement, racism, and oppression are parts of our nation's history. That cannot be denied; and collectively, we gain nothing in contemporary society by denying this truth. Curricula based on truth and evidence, while uncomfortable, should not be banned from our schools. Teaching our students an incomplete history of our nation is irresponsible and passing legislation to prevent teaching the truth is equally irresponsible.

As a scholar of American History and African American History, I ask you to strongly consider my testimony opposing HB 322 and vote NO on this dangerous bill.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any additional questions or provide input as needed.

Sincerely,
Tiyi Morris, PhD
Associate Professor

***** OBJECTIONS TO HOUSE BILL 322 & SUB HOUSE BILL 327 *****

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- Both education bills were nefariously referred to the State and Local Government Committees, of which only 3 of 15 members have any professional education-related experience, versus the Primary and Secondary Education Committee ,where 10 of 15 members have direct education experience, and whose primary role and function are to expertly examine and scrutinize education-related legislation. Only 2 members of the Primary and Secondary Education Committee co-sponsor these bills - neither of which was an education practitioner.
- The stated 'need' for the bills is not evidence-based, neither sponsor could present actual facts or reports to support the bills, both are trying to address issues that do not exist
- Sponsors are actively combatting efforts to instill the practices and principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion by veiling them as "Divisive Concepts", "Critical Race Theory", and "Action Civics"
- The bills censor and restrict honest education and accountability of our nation's past, present, and future, and severely polices what and how educators are allowed teach this content
- Leading and trusted statewide education agencies, practitioners, and communities directly oppose the bills - [Ohio Federation of Teachers](#), [Ohio Education Association](#)
- The bills brazenly remove Home Rule and local control from key education stakeholders, such as practitioners, educators, elected school boards, parents and community members
- Pieces of the bill are redundant and unnecessary: By law, districts are required to host a public review period of any new text books and curriculum
- **HB 327**
 - Several areas of the bill are ambiguous and purposely vague: Does not define "promote"; does not define criteria for violations of bill, process for reporting, and process for evaluation and who evaluates, and process for defunding and suspension of professional licensing
 - Removes free speech and academic freedom from higher education
 - Threatens and intimidates educators into compliance by removing up to 100% of state funding and revoking education licensure for violations of the bill. This is devastating for districts ALREADY dangerously underfunded and under-resourced.