

## Opponent Testimony for House Bill 327

Ashlee Mason-Cleary  
State and Local Government Committee  
9/20/2021

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Ashlee Mason-Cleary. I am a history enthusiast, genealogist, and proud Ohioan. I strongly oppose HB 327, and would like to address one portion in particular:

(E) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit discussing or using supplemental instructional materials, as part of a larger course of academic instruction or training, to teach divisive concepts in an objective manner and without endorsement. Such materials may include the following:

- (1) The history of an ethnic group, as described in textbooks and instructional materials adopted in accordance with statutory law concerning textbooks and instructional materials;
- (2) The impartial discussion of controversial aspects of history;
- (3) The impartial instruction on the historical oppression of a particular group of people based on race, ethnicity, class, nationality, religion, or geographic region;
- (4) Historical documents permitted under statutory law, such as the national motto, the national anthem, the Ohio Constitution, the United States Constitution, the Revised Code, federal law, and United States Supreme Court decisions.

The language cited above is extremely vague and the consequences for violating it are so intimidating they make historical instruction a serious legal liability for educators. I'm concerned that educators will minimize instruction on the history of slavery and racism to avoid any possible controversy. Generations of brave Americans, including many outstanding Ohioans, struggled to remove overtly racist laws and social norms. Their hard work and determination made our nation even greater than the founders imagined. Passing HB 327 would conceal the true magnitude of their accomplishments and would thus be a great disservice to Ohio students.

As a proud Ohioan and history enthusiast, I ask you to consider my testimony opposing HB 327 and vote no on this bill. Thank you, again, for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any additional questions or provide input as needed. You may reach me via email at [talesofyearsago@gmail.com](mailto:talesofyearsago@gmail.com).

Respectfully submitted,  
Ashlee Mason-Cleary

