

September 20, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

In HB 322 and HB 327, the driving factor in both bills are to make sure that K-12 students have a quality, 21<sup>st</sup> Century education. Due to computers, cell phones, and media we have never been more connected to each other across the globe as we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We are interdependent on each other to learn and grow from our successes and our failures. No country is perfect and all have made mistakes. The action is how we handle our mistakes and the teaching of our children how to get better.

From the current head count data on the Ohio Department of Education website, Ohio has approximately 1.7 million students in its classrooms. This is how many people will be entering our colleges, the military, and the workforce in the next 20 years, and we need them to be able to work with many different people and cultures. We will expect them to be learners from current events and be able to think critically about the topics in the world. We need our students to be tomorrow's problem solvers.

To be prepared for tomorrow, we have to start training our students today. This means the students need to know the issues that are happening in our nation and the world in order to learn. They need to be able to look at an issue and dissect its components, look at the history and context of the situation to form their opinion. This constructive dissection takes place at school. Teachers are trained professionals who know how to guide conversations. Our schools are think tanks for young leaders ready to find their voice for our future. We cannot expect our students to lead if we ban history and current events from their learning.

Our teachers are professionals who have 4 if not 6 years of collegial learning. They know their facts and they know how to teach it. Banning topics of conversation about current events, history, and identity turn our students into cogs and not creative thinking problem solvers. We need to honor each lived experience in our classrooms and not quell the learning that goes on in a robust environment filled with multiple view points and experiences.

Just as we as adults bring to our professions our histories and lived experiences, our students do the same. I would never want some one to be silenced because of their race or their experience with racism for fear of the government. We have 283,311 black students in Ohio, 113,667 Latinx students, 45,749 Asian students, 2092 Native American students, and 99,584 multi racial students constitute 32% of our student body. This law will silence all of those student voices making them feel invalidated in school and that their story does not matter. This bill while silencing a large group of students will impact 100% of our entire school population. Because we are so interconnected to each other, this impacts the sum of all of our students. True history is not taught and we cannot expect colleges to make up for this knowledge gap. This is why I am opposed to HB 327 and HB 322.

If we want our students to be competitive in a global economy, they have to know the truth about the impact of all events past, present, and those that will happen. We could be at the cusp of racial reconciliation for our country if we had people that were willing to sit down and listen to the lived experiences of those who have been silenced. But this will not happen if

pass HB 322 and HB 327 and we mark through events we don't like and tell others not to teach them for fear of personal and financial consequences. We have never done that in education and cannot think of any reason on why we would start to do that now.

Thank you for your time in reading my letter.

Hilary Sloat