

**Testimony from Jan Resseger on Ohio House Bill 322 and HB 327  
Ohio State and Local Government Committee, September 21, 2022**

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

My name is Jan Resseger. I reside in Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

I strongly oppose House Bill 322 and HB 327.

At the heart of the content of public school social studies classes is teaching about the public policies and laws that shape our institutions and the history of the choices our leaders have made in the past. Children and adolescents ought to be encouraged to question and critique and analyze what is happening in our world.

Economic and racial inequality is a fact in the United States and it should not be denied. Students need to understand that institutional and structural racism persist in laws and institutional practices. Children are not responsible for past injustice but are instead obligated to understand the issues and work to help our society more perfectly represent the ideals of the Founders.

From the time of its founding, our nation has committed itself to a set of ideals about equality and opportunity that are not fully reflected in the realities of our lives today. Educating our children about the disparity between who we are and who we aspire to be can only positively motivate our students to work to close the gap between our society's declared aspirations and today's reality.

Discussing the biases that pervade our public life and public policy is a necessary part of K-12 education. Students need to learn to analyze and evaluate the speech of politicians as well as to create well-reasoned argument as a central purpose of expository writing.

While I certainly agree that neither school districts nor teachers ought to thrust their own politics onto their students or demand that their students take particular positions or advocate for particular positions, I believe HB 322 and HB 327 will work to intimidate open discussion and suppress an honest exploration of our nation's history in Ohio's public school social studies classrooms.