

Testimony of Daniel Piccolo, DMA
Before the House Higher Education Committee
Rep. Tom Young, Chair
May 11, 2023

Chair Young, Ranking Member Miller, and Members of the Higher Education Committee:

My name is Dan Piccolo, and I am a professor of Music at Bowling Green State University, where I have taught for seven years. I do not represent BGSU, but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Substitute House Bill 151.

I am strongly opposed to this bill, and I urge you not to vote it into law. This bill represents a dangerous trend in our democracy, whereby legislators weaponize the legislative process to advance their own personal and religious dogmas for political gain, rather than protecting the individual freedoms of *all* Ohioans. This includes the faculty members who would, through the passage of HB 151, see limits placed on their rights of free speech and academic freedom, but also their students, who would have their right to an intellectually rigorous education infringed upon.

Let me be clear: I am strongly opposed to *any* legislation that limits free speech or academic freedom, and this bill does just that. Legislating the subject matter that can be taught at the highest levels of education in our state is a slippery slope. HB 151 claims to protect intellectual diversity, yet it forbids certain subjects and mandates others. It should be obvious that this will have the opposite effect to the bill's stated intent.

I ask you to consider my testimony, as well as the many opposing testimonies you will here today, and vote NO on this harmful bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Daniel C. Piccolo