

# WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 5/5/23

Name: Elijah Fenwick - Sanders

Are you representing: Yourself  Organization

Organization (If Applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Title: Teacher / Taxpayer

Address: 3183 Golden Ave

City: Cincinnati State: OH Zip: 45226

Best Contact Telephone: 812-204-9332 Email: ELSanders88@gmail.com

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes  No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB 103

Specific Issue: Government waste

Are you testifying as a: Proponent  Opponent  Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes  No

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 2 minutes

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

*Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.*

Chair Bird, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee; I would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit opponent party testimony regarding House Bill (HB) 103.

I am a country bumpkin from the Ohio River Valley whose public school provided an opportunity to grow and learn, which opened my mind to a world I could only guess at in my youth. Instead of seeing my life within the confines of my local cornfield. I was taught about industry, technology, art, literature, history, community and the beauty of domestic and international travel. The idea that my teacher's ideology would influence me was about as laughable as current Ohio social studies teachers indoctrinating today's youths. Because they are some of the most noble and proud people I know. I am now a taxpaying homeowner in Cincinnati, a proud husband and father of one, a public school teacher and member of Social Studies non-profit organizations. I am testifying as a proud citizen of the Ohio River Valley, Ohio and the United States of America and I am asking this committee to oppose HB 103.

There's a lot to be said about Ohio students needing more teaching in the foundational documents of our great Constitutional Democracy. Our bi-partisan curriculum put together and reviewed through the arduous and thankless work of the Ohio Department of Education already does that. Ohio educators, parents, community stakeholders and concerned citizens are not interested in the musings of a big D.C. or New York non-profits who think they know what's best for Ohio students without actually doing any work in our communities, schools or classrooms. Even if the current Ohio standards were vague, which they are not, it would be unwise and an injustice to spend the time and taxpayer dollars to form another partisan bureaucratic committee with the mandate of implementing an unproven and truly vague standards framework with a clear ideological drive. Ohio is better than that. We have led before and we will lead again. Not for those who look at us as a flyover state for the taking, but for the neighbors we know and love.

As an educator, I do not teach historical fanfiction. I navigate a complex and beautiful history where I try to bring history to life while competing with the ideology of extremism and apathy pushed by the most current social media platform algorithm. I am happy to use Common Sense Society materials the same as I would use the Bill of Rights Institute, iCivics or StreetLaw Inc. My concern is that those latter organizations are not trying to pigeonhole my state standards into a partisan body of 9. The idea that this task force could then responsibly and transparently rewrite the entirety of the K-12 Ohio curriculum standards by August seems unlikely and disingenuous to the work my colleagues and I do over the summer and everyday in the classroom. Implementing this task force would waste thousands, if not millions of dollars, that could be use for the Ohio Fair School Funding plan as it runs counter to the limited government tradition of Ohio public schools, as well as, the popular sovereignty, checks & balances and separation of powers principles fundamental to the US and Ohio Constitutions.

Our public schools do face challenges, there's no doubt. Ohio parents, teachers, administrations and school boards are more than up to the task. This proposed task force offers no solutions. Just more culture wars and more divisions pushed by out of state monied and ideological interests. Ohio taxpayers deserve better. I do not know how to solve the culture wars that divide us, but I humbly submit to this committee to recognize that HB 103 does not solve it either. Please table this bill.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today and I would be happy to answer any questions.