

Testimony for HB 171
Submitted by: Sarah Prochak
Testifying as Proponent

Chair Bird, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee,

My name is Sarah Prochak, and I live in Worthington, Ohio. I am a parent, behavioral health professional, graduate student, and concerned citizen, and I am asking this committee to support HB 171 which updates the Social Studies model curriculum to better reflect the histories of all Ohioans by including the migration histories, societal contributions and experiences of a range of communities in Ohio and the United States who are not currently represented in our classrooms.

I believe that passing this bill is good for Ohio and Ohio students because we can no longer accept the erasure of many students' histories in our children's schools and curriculum. Students from all backgrounds and experiences deserve to be seen and represented in order to realize their full potential. Additionally, it is imperative that students learn and see the whole history of Ohio, not just the ones that look like them. As educators and parents, we teach children the value of honesty and this value belongs in our education system as well when it comes to social studies curriculum.

Shortly after moving to Worthington School District from Columbus City Schools, I was disheartened to learn that my son's teacher engaged her students in zero lessons on Black Ohioans during Black History Month. During the month of February 2023, every day he came home I asked him what he learned about Black History, and every day I was saddened to hear that there were no lessons being taught related to Black History in Ohio or the United States. In those moments I learned that it was not enough for school districts to espouse ideas of empathy and belonging for their students if they are not put into action by teachers in educational lessons on a daily basis. Teachers need support in enhancing their curriculums with updated and comprehensive lessons to include the full history of Ohio. Students and families across all communities and schools in Ohio might not know about Ohio's rich and diverse cultures without an updated social studies curriculum. Students across Ohio deserve more from teachers who are supposed to educate all children about ALL children.

We fail our kids when we do not provide them with an education that truly **mirrors Ohio's current makeup as a state**. H.B. 171 can solve for that by educating students about the experiences, migration, and contributions of a range of communities that already, and in many cases, have long called Ohio home. H.B. 171 has the backing and support of the **vast majority of Ohio teachers**, with endorsements from Ohio Education Association, Ohio Federation of Teachers, and Ohio Council of the Social Studies.

I respectfully urge the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee to consider my testimony and to vote yes in support of H.B. 171. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify in support of this legislation.

Thank you