

Chairman Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Workforce and Higher Education

Committee,

As concerned citizens, Ohio residents, and employees of Miami University, we are writing to express our opposition to Senate Bill 83, the Higher Education Enhancement Act. While the bill may seem well-intentioned at first glance, it will have disastrous consequences for our state's economy, educational institutions, and students.

First, this bill threatens the economic growth that Ohio has been working hard to achieve. Businesses, like Intel, that have recently chosen to relocate to Ohio will undoubtedly be put off by the state's regressive policies since they limit the ability of Ohio's universities to provide students with necessary workplace skills and know-how. That's a liability for Ohio's economy.

Moreover, this bill threatens academic freedom, the cornerstone of our nation's post-secondary educational system. Under SB 83, universities would be required to teach "both sides" of controversial issues, including climate change, rather than teaching established scientific facts. In a recent op-ed published by the Miami Student, Theresa Kulbaga and Cathy Wagner note that, "the bill, while claiming to advance "intellectual diversity," does the opposite. It will interfere with student access to concepts, courses and conversations that foster self-understanding and an understanding of the world they live in. What's more, the bill will gut multiple programs in health sciences and other disciplines by preventing them from meeting national accreditation standards."

Furthermore, this bill could have serious implications for Ohio's accreditation of academic programs. As noted by Pennington, "accreditation for [many] graduate programs demands that issues related to DEI 'are reflected throughout our graduate curriculum—in theory and in practice.'" SB 83 would put these programs at risk of losing accreditation.

In conclusion, Senate Bill 83 is bad for Ohio. It threatens our economy, our educational institutions, and our students. We urge you to vote against this bill and support policies that will promote academic freedom, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and economic growth in Ohio.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

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<https://www.miamioh.edu/ehs/academics/departments/tce/about/faculty-staff/index.html>