

Testimony of Dorothy Supp, PhD
Before the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee
Senator Jerry Cirino, Chair
May 17, 2023

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Workforce and Higher Education Committee:

My name is Dorothy Supp, and I am an adjunct professor of Surgery at the University of Cincinnati, College of Medicine, where I have taught and been engaged in medical research for over 20 years. I do not represent the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 83.

As a professor involved in both teaching and medical research, I am extremely concerned about the negative impacts Senate Bill 83 (and companion HB 151) will have on the state of Ohio. If enacted, the major impact of this bill will be to politicize college education in Ohio's public universities, creating conflicts and increasing the burden on faculty and staff while affecting few if any real improvements in education. As a scientist, I am particularly concerned about the potential effects on the teaching scientific facts that some with certain political or religious beliefs may consider controversial; for example, evolution by natural selection and climate change. Will biologists be forced to teach Creationism alongside evolution? Will engineers be discouraged from researching alternative energy sources? Instead of the future-looking institutions we are so proud of in Ohio, this bill seeks to turn back the clock and take our public colleges and universities backwards. At the University of Cincinnati, the last two decades have seen enormous growth and international recognition of our academic excellence and future-focused initiatives. This is all jeopardized by HB 83.

This bill is a solution to a problem that does not exist. Our universities already have mechanisms in place to address concerns of students, including students who may feel they are treated unfairly because of their personal, political, and/or religious viewpoints. The new mandates are onerous, expensive, and will not improve our students' educations. They appear to be wholly **politically motivated** and will put Ohio at a disadvantage in competitions for the best and brightest students, educators, and administrators. The proposed mandates are rushed and not well-conceived, and some are likely unworkable or even illegal. Our universities are already struggling with insufficient funding and a shortage of qualified workers at all levels. This bill is not designed to help this situation, and almost certainly will make it worse. If this passes, it will hurt our economy due to the "brain drain" that will certainly follow, as our most talented students and educators leave Ohio (with businesses who rely on our bright graduates to soon follow).

As an Ohio resident, taxpayer, voter, parent, and public university employee, I express my strong opposition to this bill and hope that Ohio legislators will oppose it as well. .

Thank you for your attention.

