



November 16, 2023

Representative Gail Pavliga
77 South High Street, Floor 11
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Representative Pavliga,

I write to inform you of my support for SB 83, the Higher Education Enhancement Act, sponsored by Senator Jerry Cirino.

In my opinion, system-wide reform of higher education in Ohio is long overdue and much needed. Senator Cirino's legislation will help redirect strategy in a way that is responsive to students, parents and Ohio taxpayers. Additionally, I believe SB 83 will provide flexibility for college and university administrators to focus resources on changing educational priorities.

Inside Higher Ed (11/10/23) reported a member of your staff revealed your position on SB 83. This staff member said: "She's not strongly in favor of the current version, or any version that's been put out this far."

This quote, if true, is shocking.

I know the vast majority of the conservative voters, who vote in Republican primary elections, support the common sense comprehensive reform of Higher Education proposed in SB 83. As inflation continues to skyrocket, every individual and organization is negatively impacted. It's important for universities and colleges to have the flexibility to meet rapidly changing demands if they are to remain viable while continuing to deliver the safest environment possible to support intellectual diversity and free speech.

This kind of Higher Education reform was received with a groundswell of support in states like Florida and Texas with Republican super-majorities in the Legislature, making the higher education experience safer and more appealing for open and respectful exploration of diverse opinion. This is the cornerstone of higher education and should be protected and enhanced at all costs, especially today as our university campuses have turned into breeding grounds of prejudice, violence, intimidation, and hate speech.

In an era of mis-, dis-, and mal-information, the exploration of truth in our colleges and universities should be of the utmost importance to our Legislature. Legal parameters for a safe, prejudice-free environment within our institutions of higher learning must be promoted to facilitate its discovery.

Additionally disturbing is this comment of your aide (*Inside Higher Ed*, 11/10/23): “I have had exactly zero people that have contacted me in favor of it.”

Maybe if you worked harder to engage your constituents in your decision-making process, you would better understand the position of the people in Portage County you were elected to represent. With this letter, you now have one constituent indicating she supports SB 83. I’d bet I represent the overwhelming majority of the Republican voters who have twice given you the Republican nomination for state representative – but will no longer support you because of your repeated betrayal of our values.

I urge you to support SB 83. It’s time to reform Higher Ed in Ohio.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heidi Workman", with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Heidi Workman
Candidate for Ohio House of Representatives
House District 72
heidw@heidiworkman.com
www.heidiworkman.com