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Medical Student  
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Testimony on SB-1

Chair Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio, and members of the House Higher Education Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony today on Senate Bill 1.

My name is Inshira Mohi-ud-din. I am a graduate of Kenyon College and a medical student at Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine. I am originally from Maryland, but over the last decade Ohio has become my home. I've lived in both rural and urban areas. I've worked alongside community organizers from the most vulnerable populations, and medical experts from the world's leading hospitals – all of whom share the same goals of health, prosperity, and equality for all Ohioans. Ohio is a state with a vast population living in medically underserved areas as well as incredible, renowned, medical centers throughout the state. I've chosen to continue my education here, to invest in this community, because I hope to be a part of making Ohio a model for putting division and propaganda aside to make choices that benefit all of our citizens.

In alignment with that mission, I firmly reject the regressive, anti-worker, fundamentally un-American policies outlined in this bill.

*Prohibition of training on times when we should “not treat others without respect to race”*, is a ban on addressing implicit biases. Medical training will be incomplete and dangerous to our patients if it requires us to ignore factual, statistically significant differences in the treatment of marginalized people. Black women in Ohio are four times more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications. I want to address this problem at its root, and I hope you do too. If we cannot name the problems that plague our community, if we cannot research them and share that research, then we are doomed to continue perpetuating them. People will die as a result of this culture war.

*Dismantling offices of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* is a thinly-veiled attack on the very thing that makes America great – opportunity. Diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives have been propagandized, but their function is to look past inequalities and create opportunities based on merit. I am extremely privileged. I acknowledge this without feeling attacked. I want everyone regardless of their race or socioeconomic status to have the same opportunities for education and success that I have.

Denying structural racism, abolishing the very offices and officers that seek to level the playing field, and eliminating scholarships for those who need it most, directly denies our history

and is antithetical to the “American Dream.” This portion of the bill serves no purpose but to sow division. To serve diverse patients, we require diverse perspectives. We need honest research, real conversations, and merit-based metrics to create a workforce that reflects the people it serves.

Finally, this bill is authoritarian. *The following components are unconstitutional and violate the principles of our democracy, specifically our freedom of speech:*

- Prohibiting public servants from striking
- Requiring academic institutions to publicly declare their allegiance to the new rules along with their mission statement - and dictating what that mission statement can/cannot include
- Requiring faculty and staff to remain neutral on topics the government declares controversial (including climate policy, foreign policy, immigration policy, DEI, marriage, and healthcare) – effectively silencing experts in the field in favor of partisan politics
- The exception to neutrality being the ability to endorse the United States government in armed hostility against another nation.

The authors of this bill claim to support the constitution, the American people, and freedom of speech. I urge them to consider the ways in which this legislature restricts our rights. We are at a critical time, on the precipice of growth and prosperity as a state. If we cheapen the quality of an Ohio education by diluting it with political interests, our state will fail. I am proud to be a resident of Ohio and an advocate for its growth. Please make the right decision today and act, not out of partisanship or divisiveness, but out of integrity and concern for the wellbeing of all constituents.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

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