

Joshua Ferry
Opponent Testimony
March 11, 2025
Ohio Workforce & Higher Education Committee

Chair Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio, and members of the Workforce & Higher Education Committee,

My name is Joshua Ferry, a senior at Cleveland State studying political science. I stand firmly against Senate Bill 1. While it claims to promote "intellectual diversity," it actually seeks to crush dissent and silence opposition, which is an abuse of power and a threat to our cherished democracy in Ohio. One major concern is the requirement to present "both sides" of a topic, potentially giving a platform to Holocaust and climate change deniers. The bill's sponsor subtly alluded to this during the March 4, 2025 testimony, stating that professors should entertain "crazy ideas" as a right of free speech. I can only guess what those 'crazy ideas' could be...

Higher education institutions should not be political pawns. While I acknowledge that public and secular private universities are more liberal, this is an externality that all of us have to acknowledge. It's not that universities are forcing liberal indoctrination, but rather that they're in areas that are bluer (either major cities or blue college towns in a sea of red). By enacting Senate Bill 83, proponents are trying to turn Ohio into a fascist state. Ohioans will fight against this government overreach. Proponents are weaponizing the state government against those they disagree with, as the sponsor admitted when he acknowledged ignoring the testimony and will of the people.

Senate Bill 1 is a radical government overreach that will harm students, professors, and higher education in Ohio. It will drive students to seek education elsewhere, potentially even outside the country. This bill is un-American and a violation of individual rights. Proponents of this bill are using the Department of Higher Education and other government agencies to go after

political opponents. This is nothing less than a deep-state operation designed to silence those that are asking for basic human rights.

In conclusion, Senate Bill 1 represents a significant overreach of government power that threatens the core principles of our democracy. It undermines the independence of higher education institutions and imposes a dangerous precedent of political interference. Ohioans must stand united against this bill to protect the rights of students, professors, and the integrity of our educational system. This bill is not only un-American but also a violation of individual freedoms. We must ensure that our higher education institutions remain places of free thought and expression, free from government overreach and political agendas.\

Thank you for taking the time to read this-

Joshua Ferry