

March 7, 2025

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Higher Education Committee,

My name is Janae Christopher. I am a social work and political science student at Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio and am halfway through completing my bachelor's degree. I do not represent Sinclair, rather, I am here to advocate for myself and the many other social work, social justice, and mental health services students who know that SB 1 and HB 6 are a threat to our education and future work in our fields.

Vice Chair Cirino, you were quoted in the Ohio Capital Journal on January 23 in response to student protestors that "The students that were out here protesting are probably getting extra credit for being here". Let me assure you that I am receiving no extra credit for taking time away from my studies to write in opposition to these bills. Also let me assure you I have read the bill and am aware of the implications it has for my education and future career as a social worker.

Those implications include the exclusion of necessary classroom curriculum that ensures every graduate who enters the field of professional helpers is equipped with the empathy, cultural humility, and better understanding of the diverse communities that inhabit the great state of Ohio and beyond. Without these skills we will fail to meet the needs of our communities as effectively as possible. The bill promotes the idea of intellectual diversity, but as we know, humans and our lived experiences are multi-faceted, and this intellectual diversity fails to foster critical thinking and discernment.

These bills will also inhibit promising and talented students from choosing to attend Ohio schools as we will find institutions in other states that provide the DEI education that we need to be successful in a competitive job market. This not only removes students from their communities, but it negatively impacts the reputation and revenue for Ohio schools.

Thank you for considering my testimony and **voting NO on SB 1 and HB 6**

Sincerely,

Janae Christopher

Dayton, Ohio